

We would have stood like sentinels  
 but you wouldn't have it.  
 No hand-wringing, no long, anxious  
 faces,  
 no whispered prayers.  
 Just you  
 alone.  
 Death claimed you  
 but you were prepared:  
 wallet, will and final arrangements  
 on the dining room table.  
 Just you  
 alone.

Suddenly, you left.  
 We were afraid to imagine  
 your last minutes.  
 No cries for help.  
 No one to hold your hand.  
 Just you  
 alone.  
 Calls unanswered,  
 notes ignored, knocks unheeded.  
 We respected your isolation.  
 Burnt out light bulbs yet  
 tomatoes in the refrigerator.  
 Just you  
 alone.

**Passive Suicide**

The shopping cart  
 with an infant seat attached  
 rested on its front end  
 and hung over the  
 railing of the bridge  
 above the railroad tracks  
 beside the highway  
 with the big green and  
 white sign that said  
 PRANCH AVENUE 1 MILE  
 because the B was broken.

**Non-fiction**

He smiles, remembering when passion  
 raged between them.  
 They stand embracing;  
 two bodies pressed together.  
 Holding on, their faces and lips touch.  
 He calls her "Peaches"  
 a nickname from bygone days.  
 Sometimes she responds.  
 In sickness and in health, everything and  
 nothing have changed.  
 She lives among the broken bodies and  
 shut-in minds.  
 He, the faithful visitor  
 loving  
 'til death do them part.

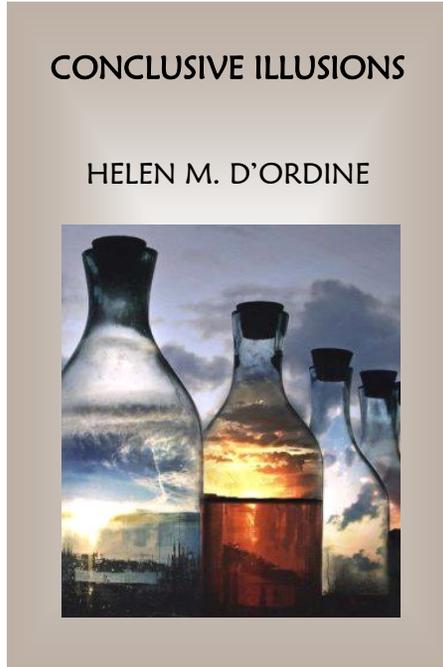
**Bedtime**

*Please recycle to a friend.*  
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**Origami Poetry Project**

**CONCLUSIVE ILLUSIONS**  
 By HELEN M. D'ORDINE  
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**In Front Of The Green Beach Umbrella**

Yielding a small patch of solitude  
 on a crowded beach  
 he executed Tai Chi with  
 slow, deliberate movements,  
 a testament to his mastery;  
 his gray hair braided, his muscles firm.

She, in lotus pose,  
 with the incoming tide  
 lapping over her legs that  
 didn't break her yoga trance  
 but added to her  
 oneness with the earth.

Later, they shared tofu and organics,  
 never craving a sip of wine.

**Gender Offender Villanelle**

It makes me feel defeminized  
 when people say "You guys". It's clear  
 the world's become desensitized.

My self-esteem is minimized.  
 This female detests the idea.  
 It makes me feel defeminized.

Womanly traits, some maximized  
 so obvious, it would appear.  
 The world's become desensitized.

The genders, blurred and compromised;  
 one lone woman, not of good cheer.  
 It makes me feel defeminized.

Cleavage abounds, I realize,  
 but "Guys! Guys! Guys!" is all I hear.  
 The world's become desensitized.

So, world, take note and be apprised!  
 Cease and desist! Lend me your ear!  
 It makes me feel defeminized.  
 The world's become desensitized.