

Parade

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Gregory Vincent St. Thomasino

ē · rā/ tiō

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## Parade

“A fainting of the mind” and “this is the undreamt of” appeared in *utsanga* #16, 2018, edited by Francesco Aprile, under the title “Thinking.”

“sight is to giving us to see” for *Gavin Selerie* appeared in the anthology, *Shape-Shifter: a tribute to Gavin Selerie*, curated by David Annwn (Shearsman Books, 2022).

“this and that,” “a space, arun and areal,” and “morning call, mornings to do” appeared in *Janus Head: Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature, Continental Philosophy, Phenomenological Psychology, and the Arts*, 2026, David Wolf, poetry editor.

Parade

*for Carol*

## Parade

I was going to include a foreword, of sorts, explaining why I self-publish, but it took on the tone of a polemic. (Now goodness knows the polemic is at home in poetry, I said to myself.)

The areas of peer review and of “tribes” came up. (I find it remarkable that something so individualistic as poetry should, and quite naturally, it appears, find itself in poetry tribes, which by the way is not what I mean by “affinities.”)

On C-SPAN, a panel of small press editors is discussing the state of publishing. One such, a New Yorker, says his first question, upon receiving the manuscript, is, Who do you publish with?

For “peer,” it’s when the senses of ability dissolve into like-mindedness. Suffice to say, cold shoulders gives just cause to rise in dissent.

The system ignores self-published poetry (and thus on a purely administrative basis a poetry is effectively expelled), and as though it is protecting something, but it is only protecting itself. That self is not the self of my poetry.

So here I am. And here are you.

# Parade

## Parade

From Dickinson I learned to be me. From Cummings I learned what is possible in poetry. From these two I learned that poetry and me was not just a possibility, but an inevitability.

In my teens, and into my twenties, I was, but as a means of survival, isolate, withdrawn into my interiority. I retreated to my room, alone with my books.

Nothing could be known, until I knew it in a sentence. The world, the stuff of my interiority, articulated, formulated, in interior speech.

Poems are a poet's best friend, especially his own.

I went out, in search of my affinities.

I think of this poetry as a cross between a Cubist painting and a Cornell box, with a sidecar of Gysin.

Following the poetry there are some notes.

# Parade

Parade

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# Parade

A fainting of the mind  
an unexpected smile

is giving round to open doors  
thinking it manners

and being square  
to the tying on of knots

saying, this is fighting shy  
this is a case of open doors

this is the cat and the bird  
and the open door

this is smoke, how  
what rises, and disappears

say, if any given A  
should be, now, here, now, there.

## Parade

this is the undreamt of  
the order made explicit

a, want of thought.  
in haste, or, want of thought.

this is by name, and this, by sight  
this is by day, and this, by night.

the lictor's rod is giving airs againe  
is making book

these are his remains,  
a company of seeds

the mica glitter in sand  
the aftertaste of peels

the might in hand, the might in eye  
the shoulder to the wheel.

## Parade

*for Gavin Selerie*

sight is to giving us to see  
the voice, in absence

is giving us to see.  
looking is to giving us to see

the coat, in absence  
is giving us to see

the house, in absence  
is giving us to see.

sight is to giving us to see  
the face, in absence

is giving us to see  
the sentence, in absence

a,  
this is to giving us to see

## Parade

## Parade

birds fly, fish swim  
people walk and run

water, water everywhere  
and not a hand to spare

A fixed observer, given one fixed star  
wheeling, in dark of morning.

the surface of the open, is  
a gladness, to see, a, hands, folding pages.

Mister whistles on his S's.  
His middle name is "Smooth."

the idea, in expression, the bliss, in fascination  
the mien, in circulation.

the passing, lip to lip, is giving leave to come and go.  
sun tonight.

## Parade

## Parade

in fable and in witness  
in season and in stone

in suggestion, a, participation  
where here and there are here is where I am,

there is where I choose to go.  
Auntie Jenny says mom's okay,

they play cards all the time.  
Uncle Buddy sees in both eyes now.

in expression, an effort of reflection  
in attraction and in appeal

and, darling, if I could give you back the day  
better or in kind

if I could give you back the day  
all mine, all mine

## Parade

by force, or by artifice, a reminiscence  
the poet, taking part

in detail and in essence, or, the looking  
to one side.

the real and the ideal, or which is similar at all  
she signals with her hand.

the, being of a kind, or, being of a kind  
will likewise be, say, in reach, in time, entire

so here I am and here are you,  
the foot is to the earth.

this is the poet, running away with himself  
the poet, parting ways

this is the poet, speaking in character  
the poet, all thumbs

## Parade

## Parade

the sometimes true and the sometimes false  
the, always true or never true

by logic or by praise, and so  
we have nothing to say, we sit.

this is years and years ago  
and your memory is perfect

to a person, to a T  
and you, exclaiming, *a job to do, a job to do*

and, how, for covenant and combine,  
for covenant, and congregation,

or, so, for making hay  
that every word is as a world apart

each, in its own point of view  
that keeps in itself all that happens to it

## Parade

## Parade

this and that, this is a penny, that is the moon  
if I lived in a house like that I'd never go out

children, holding hands, marching two by two  
I remember nothing of having ever said a word to you

dogs bark at pictures of dogs,  
birds alight on pictures of window bars,

some of us scream sometimes,  
some of us scream sometimes

a sign, exclaiming, closure, no performance,  
a sign, exclaiming, abandoned crew

and I am, I am,  
I am jollity, and old age

I am planets, and cleverness  
I live in an attic room

## Parade

## Parade

a space, arun and areal,  
a hand to spare

attendant,  
and at issue,

a voice,  
a, lips in kisses,

an epitome.  
and how

shadows show the sun,  
darkness shows the stars

neither morning nor evening  
the reluctance, are

neither spring nor fall, boy  
in Carrara

## Parade

morning call, mornings to do  
I dig in the dirt in my own back yard

swans are fours, bees are threes  
giraffes are sevens

bears are six  
a little bear is also six

rhinos are the letter m  
pigs are the @ symbol

my love, my love, there is no tomorrow  
no day after today

my love, my love, there is no tomorrow  
no day after today

my love, my love, there is no tomorrow  
no day after today

## Parade

## Parade

this is a plain and this is the ocean  
we live on the plain, we live on the ocean

this is a plain and this is the ocean  
we live on the plain, we live on the ocean

she says, where is my beret  
she says Dalí is the greatest painter of bread

and it's been taken a bite out of  
she says no one really knows what happens when we die,

everywhere he kisses me, I begin to bleed.  
the sign of the crazy is the crazy thinks everyone is crazy

some are holding dolls  
she says my silence is nobody's business,

she says my silence is nobody's business,

## Parade

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this is a plain and this is the ocean  
we live on the plain, we live on the ocean

this is a plain and this is the ocean  
we live on the plain, we live on the ocean

morning call, mornings to do  
woodcock, wader's bill, withers

not dry, but not drippy, she says  
some doors open in, some doors open out

the thought of it alone, she says  
opening in, opening out

The thought of it alone.  
the turning to applause, the turning, to applause

This is waiting turn.  
This is the book you keep as a secret.

## Parade

## Parade

morning call, mornings to do  
who cooks for you, who cooks for you all

more in letter than in life, says owl Mr. Barr  
beware his box of lures

rabbits come in nines, snails are dashes  
horses snort when black pony nears

you are a counting, the letter I, a  
what is seen through the lens of a number

this snail is Mr. Biggs, moony Mr. Biggs  
this rabbit is Tiddlywinks, Tiddly is spinning, see

this is an alignment of eyes, an alignment of dashes  
this is your high ceiling,

this is your Jane's books on turtles and marigold  
and Mr. Parsley Head

## Parade

Parade

*for Carey Scott Wilkerson*

*with a left and a right and another left and a right  
and JC is down for the count*

I hear his wife is crosseyed  
I hear he was so hungry, he ate the skin off his lips

a man like that could, really, only be besties with a woman  
he says, no one's holding a gun to your head

and, never doubt the statements of a child.  
this is the form of being born again

love it or list it, USA  
none truer, redder, whiter or bluer.

this is JC, pulling off his boots  
he says, I don't believe this for a minute

he says, I want a dog that bites  
and, kid, you get to ride up front

## Parade

## Parade

saying matters

the saying being holy means in your suffering  
and how you innocently went for pumpkins, and, lo,

finds a brood of catcher's mitts.  
this is what they call full swing

the, bathers  
in pencil, on gampi

I'm never giving up my pain, you say  
my love for her lives in my pain.

these are his shoes, a solitary chair  
when people laugh they say *ha, ha, ha*.

stage is coming,  
stand, you fool.

## Parade

## Parade

believing is repeating, she has an eye for letters  
cue the misturn, persist.

I thought you were a dope, now I wonder  
I'm surprised but then I'm not surprised

the year begins in winter and ends in winter  
fix regrets the error

I was born in the month of February  
and all my life I've been misspelling February.

the child mimes the comma  
a, latch, a leaf, a floret, florette, a lean to, leaning to

Apples, backwards, in black loafers.  
this is begging pardon

believing is repeating, she has an eye for letters  
cue the misturn, persist.

## Parade

## Parade

passengers, buckle up  
and let us stand for the national anthem

boaters, there, ready about, drummers, a lens  
is giving us to see, the world inside a word.

*but through the devil's envy, death entered the world*  
it is the job of the living, to grieve.

another day, another stone to the weight  
another weal, another woe, my geometry

five five, five six, she's a minimalist  
she thinks we have too many books

she thinks it's all right for people to take.  
parade, mine none other

and in the end, say  
in the end they marry, and everybody lives forever

## Parade

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they're calling me "fast gun," no one is asking why  
and, "on the double," "on the double"

it's just a penny piece of candy,  
what couldn't buy a lick of cream

when I was catty I could spring up and twist and scratch  
and land on my feet, says Kitty

I mean, we all got our thing, we do  
I got my thing, we do

some friends of friends of mine were singing  
giving them to sing, I say

all I ask of the day is will you give me work,  
my skull is in my hands

in my dream I caught Hamlet's eye, he turned  
he said, pay no mind to absurd dreams

## Parade

## Parade

overheard at the reading, *it's always the same people,*  
*one wonders do they ever make new friends*

no one thought that way, he whispered to himself  
and if they did, he thought, they kept it to themselves

and the thing I said to myself, he thought, was *no*,  
but as though I just could not accept it,

*any real arc of character would disprove the concept*  
One wonders,

the value in truth and the value in survival  
the ritual and its interpretation, or

what is uppermost and what is lowermost  
a turning, to applause

*no*, she says, *salvation through confession*  
*and redemption through good works*

## Parade

exclamation point.

*uh-oh*, here comes a good cry,

*uh-oh*, here comes a good roof

or,

when a prayer is but a wish  
and a wish is but an exclamation point.

One wonders,  
what is uppermost and what is lowermost

the ritual and its interpretation  
all this cleansing and dressing of the wound

This is making quote,  
a cry is just as good as a roof to a happy man

or when a cry is but an exclamation point  
!

## Parade

the stitch is to the line  
as what can only be straight,

but in the circle of time  
the line is winding

what is it, that is not struck, plucked,  
blown or beat, but fed

it is the receptacle, and in a manner  
the nurse of all generation

the stitch is to time a timeline,  
and is, at once, both vertical and horizontal

a stitch in time exists in fact  
and not merely in metaphor

as the straight man, who feeds the line  
in a comedy duo

## Parade

## Parade

And time *-ing* is of the essence.  
the infinite return to the finite identity,

yea, begetter and begettress, some call her Pistis  
Savior and Sophia, Crown of the One-Liners

Time exteriorized, and indeed, it is observable  
the turning, to applause, line.

Anything is somebody's thing  
they were dancing like they were at a wedding

someone said, *well, yes, we're not going to get bored*  
and by all means, keep a straight face

to do is to turn a page, and ask  
how did I get here

A, transposition  
pointing, puncture, perforate, aperçu

## Parade

am I round or am I square  
or am I zigzag

the zigzag knows so many turns  
as does the square

and more if it goes on and on  
and on and on and on

and, anyways, round is everywhere  
and nowhere

salt, salt everywhere  
and not a hand to spare

the secret to sleeping on the beach  
is wrapping her head in her bandanna

salt in the eyes, in the tears, in the sweat  
salty planet

## Parade

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overheard at the ambassador's,  
*I notice there are no people in your paintings*

transition, the embassy by moonlight  
the monster appears beneath the ambassador's balcony

the ivy refers us back to the mantel in the children's room  
this is the iconic shot we know from countless articles and mentions

the ambassador appears and beckons to the monster to follow  
gala, the ballroom

even now, the monster is unable to speak  
and, deafened by the giant bells, is even now unable to hear

howbeit, the I, that is, in its interiority, a giving one to sing  
howbeit, the I, that, painted by hand is hand-painted

howbeit, the I, in its interiority, is giving one to sing  
howbeit, the I, that, in its interiority, is an epitome

# Parade

## Parade

overheard at the clinician's, *I can't give you my love,*  
*but I can give you my attention*

this is "out the door," some are saying "out the door"  
some are waiting to come in

they are putting down palm, this is the face I see  
they are walking on red carpet, this is the face I see

Altman's surf blonde is p'ing in the ocean  
this is the secret to p'ing in the ocean

reading you was a penance,  
a, pose and counterpose.

this is a poem with the word hate in it  
this is an asylum,

and as for those who don't know it's an asylum,  
it's because of them it's an asylum

## Parade

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the flip side to obsequiousness is resentment  
my favorite thing about the skateboard, how it doubles as a weapon

these scenes were shot out of sequence  
the weekend at the institute left me feeling poisoned

lying awake, singing to myself  
all the Peter, Paul & Mary songs I know by heart

beginning with “Puff” and “If I Had a Hammer”  
this is my enlistment,

the sort of thing one is turning to attention,  
a, sometime better in part than in whole

the bell on the collar on the cat in the garden  
summons me, to feed him

and we sit  
and when I open my eyes, he is gone

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“a space, arun and areal,” There are three syllables in “areal.” The base word is *area*.

“boy / in Carrara” is Michelangelo’s *David*. Carrara is a town in Tuscany, in northern Italy, notable for the white or blue-grey marble quarried there.

“some are holding dolls” “Dolls” an essay in response to an exhibition of the “dolls” of the puppeteer Lotte Pritzel by Rainer Maria Rilke 1913-1914. “In these figures the doll has at last outgrown the understanding, the sympathy, the pleasure, and the sorrow of the child, it has become independent, grown-up, prematurely old, it has entered upon all the unrealities of its own life.”

“this is an alignment of eyes, an alignment of dashes” Eyes opened, eyes closed.

“catcher’s mitts.” Polydactyl cats have extra toes on their paws, such as may resemble a catcher’s mitt, and so the term.

“these are his shoes, a solitary chair” Vincent van Gogh painted shoes (1886), and a chair (1888).

“but through the devil’s envy” from The Book of Wisdom 2:23-24.

“it is the receptacle, and in a manner” see Plato, *Timaeus*, Tr. B. Jowett, 49 b.

“someone said, *well, yes, we’re not going to get bored*” *Ben oui on va pas se faire chier*.

“overheard at the clinician’s, *I can’t give you my love*,” Simone Weil writes of a form of pure attention, to see the real relationships among things, free from self-interest. This “attention” is the only true motive for action, because it does not seek reward or justification. Weil died at the age of 34.

“Altman’s surf blonde” Robert Altman, director, *The Long Goodbye* 1973.

Brion Gysin said (1958?) that writing was fifty years behind painting.

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Gregory Vincent St. Thomasino lives in New York City.

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*taxis de pasa logos*



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