

A TANGO FOR GUINEVERE

Walter Nash

(Mrs. Jennifer Scola, who teased me into dancing)

This elderly Lancelot
at eighty, alas, has not
a reserve of the verve and the nerve to go as far as man can go,
being not altogether fit
or possessed of sufficient wit
to be sleek and superior and show a taut posterior
while doing the tango.

These octogenarian bones
were lively in the old Paul Jones,
I was elegant and ardent in the Dashing White Sergeant, none fleeter
in the Veleta;
in my pomp I could stomp, I could romp like a cow in the clover,
or twirl my special girl in the whirl of the waltz,
without falling over.

But it's gone, as the westering sun or a flickering dream goes,
and whither the waters are flowing, only the stream knows.
I am not as other men, Jenny Wren, I need an anaesthetic,
and my moving parts are works of art, and mainly prosthetic,
and I sense how the simpering diners are embarrassed, rather,
telling each other I'm older than enough to be your father.

So let us tempt no more
the illusion of the dancing floor,
Say good-bye to the glitter in the eye, to the seeing and deceiving,
and when the music ends,
dear madam, we'll join our friends
until it's time for the beckoning, the calling for the reckoning - and the car -
and to be leaving. [Olé]

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