

NEW YORKER IN HIS LAP

In Memory of G.M.P., 1900-1979

Leland Jamieson

Martini carefully held in his left hand,
New Yorker under arm, he tossed his mail.
A smile lit up his eyes and face—he planned
“an evening in the City” where he’d sail
its noisy streets, view storefronts’ bright detail—
all re-imagined with a young man’s flair,
without so much as rising from his chair.

In person, he’d not dare to go back there
(or Boston—either one). He’d feel such loss—
lost landmarks, and, lost self—the debonair,
“most likely to succeed” who failed to gloss,
lost glitzy sales; who, angry at his boss,
had quit, in ‘31, his well-paid job
with the City’s best known architectural snob.

He peddled fruit, and heaters—and lost heart.
Rescued by friends, he sailed to Egypt for
the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
On Tutankhamen’s tomb he worked, with rapport,
acting as the Curator’s ambassador,
acquiring the Mediterranean “eye”
that he became well-known for—by-and-by.

But Harvard, Boston, New York City—then
was then, and so is “by-and-by,” now, too!
He sits. He dozes off. He wakes in Zen,
warming to the view there’s nothing he could do,
or would, much differently—and he’d not rue
a single day as long as he had brains,
time come, to toss the astral plane the reins.