5-1-2017

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Ernest Williamson

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Mendicant’s Cemetery

by Ernest Williamson

75 years of life;
all but a moment,
limp skin,
decaying teeth uneven, lateral yet everywhere;
in the open sea of observers
trying to defuse words.
repulsed facial expressions
contorted smiles and frowns
immersed with contour lines
map-like with no legend
yet understandable.
you see me
varicose veins
abstruse vocalizations
the scent of older old spice
white hairs meandering in darker ones.
sullen eyes beaten
by the apathetic disappointments of life.
a marriage of 50 years,
now a memory
invisible
yet there;
at Mendicant’s cemetery,
in fragile oak picture frames,
elusive smells
some pleasant
some alluring
like fried eggs smothered in aged black pepper
or fowl smells like
memories of helpless arguments
about why I rarely said
“I love you”
and why you said “not tonight”
more than “whatever you want is fine with me.”
but now my sands have slid down into dirt,
and whatever you want
above my cracked yellow bones
is fine and dandy
in tattered thought
in dreary deed
as I beg and plead
for the life of
me.