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John Graves Morris

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A Simple Disquisition
About Nothing

by John Graves Morris

Allow me to talk awhile about nothing,
what a man feels burning the letters
a woman whose name he will never
again permit to be spoken in his presence

once sent him declaring her love,
the flames smooching her calligraphy,
smudging it back to the ashes from which
and to which he would happily consign her, too.

This is the same nothing a woman feels
before collecting all the letters
her father ever scrawled to her,
page-protecting them in a folder

in the order of their composition
to begin her exegesis of his messages
that have placed her in the binder
of his ambivalences about women.

What does nothing have to do with
the way an airplane’s contrails
are backlit by the early morning sun
as it attains cruising altitude,

mirroring a man’s heart rate rising
with the light of Saturday morning,
his free breath streaming all the way
out and up to a plateau of exultation?
What does it have to do with a man
during his late afternoon walk in the park
learning to see and learn anew
with myopic eyes creating out of lights

suddenly bursting as dusk rises into
a garden of anchored dandelion seeds,
pointing him a different path, newer wisdom
as if the stars had been strewn before him?

Logically, nothing is as nothing does,
and nothing will naturally be in between,
but how can it all result in Our Nada
who art in Nada when the tangible world

keeps unstoppering its daily cork
and spilling out nothing less
than a liquor fragile, but intoxicating,
if we can only learn how to drink.