

Andrew Frisardi

Silver Lovers

If you and I were plates
Set neatly on a table,
We'd be such even mates
We'd never be unstable.

Or covers of a book
With a long tale between:
We'd miss each other's look
And what the look might mean.

Or, say, a door ajar
Aslant a strident hinge:
We'd wake to who we are
With every opening twinge.

Or else a pair of shoes
In tandem locomotion:
Which would be which, whose whose?
Our steps would be devotion.

As long parallel tracks
Converging in a field,
We wouldn't turn our backs
On what our differences yield.

At last, as lanky grasses,
Who could tell us apart
Once the mower passes,
Impartial in his art?

We know we're silver lovers,
Our tarnish is understood,
So let's crawl in the covers
And shine our silver good.

The Bishop's Tomb in Montefiascone

Non est hic (He is not here). — Matthew 28:6

The priest who found the sign
It's here! It's here!! It's here!!!
Is here. He stayed so long
He caved to local gods
Of boiling eels in wine
And nodding off at synods.

Est! Est!! Est!!! His tomb
Is his flask, his wish is clear
In stone. His spirit's trip
To God became his body's.
Above the caryatids
Like fat men playing cards,

A palimpsest of frescoes
In patches on pocked walls
Resembles a fabled life
Or a half-remembered dream
That's neither true nor false
For being somewhere else.

Sometimes this world is fog
As thick as any curd.
What do a last-ditch prayer
And a marinated cleric
Have in common? The word
That answers them is here.

NOTE: *Est! Est!! Est!!!* is an Italian white wine based in Montefiascone, a town in central Italy. Wikipedia says of the story behind it: "The unusual name of the wine region dates back to a 12th-century tale of a German bishop traveling to the Vatican for a meeting with the pope. The bishop sent a prelate ahead of him to survey the villages along the route for the best wines. The 'wine scout' had instructions to write 'Est' (Latin for 'There is') on the door or on the wall of the inns he visited when he was particularly impressed with the quality of the wine they served so

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the bishop following on his trail would have known in advance where to make a stop. At a Montefiascone inn, the prelate was reportedly so overwhelmed with the local wine that he wrote *Est! Est!! Est!!!* on the door.”