

ILONA KARMEL WRITING PRIZES

ROBERT A. BOIT PRIZE

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1 Chess

One morn ascending tiled stairs
my gaze down sky-filled city blocks
found microscopic lamp-like hairs
to fight the sun at Six O'clock.

The filtered light rained thick as waves
uprush stone scarps, shift pebbled beach
whilst battling gulls and oysters brave
backrush to sand, pearl white sun bleached.

Yon sailors played symphonic wind
their cannons' deep bass trembling wood,
encored termites, and Betelgeuse,
cherubim, Chains of Being Good.

The Earth was once a mud-splotched haze,
a friendly fog o'er grassy lawn
distract me not; stay true, fierce gaze!
I must make due, quick learn the song

of business strategies to sway
and save the earth and people there
to break new ground and bypass clay
to lead the team combined and fair.

Concealing spoils of milk and war
to scheme and map ranged mountains' peak
one spies below the sailors moored
one pines above the pines for trees.

Yet here I climb, lethargically
with import and vague lots to do
to quantify and logically
to chessify the earth untrue.

2 Soldier Lake

Heel to toe I beat the path
imprinting bygone treads
thinking muscle-killer thoughts
and plowing straight ahead.

Lift the chin and stack the spine
let jar and lunge quake bone
fix auburn poplar dead ahead
and forge the body hone.

Quarter turn two rapid swerves
approach Ghost Mound then flee
past Weaver Wood, Red Fire Dome,
Leafcutter Home, Bull Tree.

Hilltop, vale, not oak-shed sail,
nor broken comrades stall
forward marching chitin tanks,
antennae probing fall.

I laid down long ago
my shoes
those swift fleet-footed things.
I built a home of pine and sap
I saw what daybreak brings.

For on that day of decades past
we tumbled through the woods,
past flower'd glades and creeks of gold
adjusting gloves and hoods.

O foolish lad, mal-loathsome eyes!
Oh, would I slipped and crashed!
If turning back I might have seen
that which so unabashed-

and glorious-ly ripples free,
frog-laden, koi, and turtle sea,
round lotus white and gleaming surf
ring'd heather-knots and cherry spurts.

Repose most tranquil I have found
in friends I may confide
but none save Mother Nature's love
consoles past wounds of time.

The paths leaf-strewn glow flame again,
set blazing Soldier Lake.
My friends still scurry 'round its shores,
hoods up, naïve namesakes.

3 A Novel Introduction: Goodbye Dear, Words

the coffee black and strong as your cream will
a soothing balm for bitter breath and chore
bids wake blank slate and fill brimflush once more
of silken thoughts and cozy smells timekilled
each portal spawns green tea chai illusions
round sushi ginger i still smiling trudge
anticipating anaconda hugs
your tulip arms round me bliss effusions

in moments these the clouds cease traveling
in moments these my heart leaps twists and chips
vast memorys sparse library offers
in moments these your face unraveling
in moments these reads historys splend lips
first creamblank page shakespearean coffer