

Two Poems · *Gian Lombardo*

THE CRASH AND ITS SOUND

Is it natural to sit at a table in a restaurant? Is it natural to watch a flock of birds perch on the chandeliers above us, above everyone else?

If someone at the table should faint, will one of the wait staff cradle her in his arms, brush her hair away from her forehead? Will another sprinkle water on her face, coo gently above her, All is well with the world: The bells are ringing. Can you hear them?

Eventually, everyone at the table falls asleep. The wait staff, too, have fallen asleep, some standing at their stations.

It is only fitting to dream that yes means yes, as well as yes means more than yes, that night feasts on color, that it is no surprise that this is what happens to the birds after a full meal of light.

THE HEART GROWS AN INCH MEASURED AGAINST THE WALL

This man sells sadness door to door. Scattered on the rug, it's horrible, terrible. It's worse than a zeppelin exploding into flame.

It won't come out. It's an embarrassment.

No one buys.

He dips into his own stock, fudges the records.

Worried about his performance, his company demands a medical assessment to protect their investment.

The conference of specialists, wags each and every one of them, scold him. You're going to live, they say. They laugh so hard their eyes mist.

It's the same old story.