

Nothing Numinous Else · *Ralph L. Kinsey*

When I sent you to Europe, you were fourteen. It was an easy matter: you were coming back.

This evening, I throw away the rotten flowers, rinse out the container. Muse over the stone you chose when your mother died. Yes, your name is carved there, just below hers. All this that I do, say, think, is fact, like nuclear fission: the existence of your nonexistence, the vase, the stone, the two names carved thereon.

The world seems to go about its business as usual. The planet wheels in proper arc, time passes methodically, I grow older. The sun turns magenta behind the Tuscarawas Valley hills. Unsmiling strangers, on foot, in automobiles, pass by.

It is incredible that you and your mother are but two yards below me, that your copper vaults are still impervious. Strange, it never occurred to me before: you both wear velvet, you, brown, she maroon. Nothing yet disturbs their folds and sheen. You lie there exactly as the mortician orchestrated your final postures.

And yet, in all the tempest of my skull, beating my brain with memories which are the backbone of sorrow, there is no sense of anything numinous else. Millennia after my name is joined with yours, the rising summer moon will hover above the fireflies casting their cold, last light across the hollows and the stillness of your mouths.