

Story for Ned's Edit

by Ann Bogle

He didn't die, in my head; in my head, he lived. I love how he lived. I loved his sky wire. He went to his doom unafraid, calling to no one, thinking of someone, characterized by a thoughtful heart and mind. All people would want to meet a man kind and thoughtful in those ways. He spelled his kname Kned, but he was not a knave and not knaïve, more Kanuck or knood. He neighbored his plants, served as father to future round tomatoes. He gave freely what there was to give. I gave a story: Two nights before his heart burst its strings near sundown Shabbat, we met at my house to wait for paint to dry. We could make an evening of that. The Russian paint crew had returned to paint my front door Rave Red. The back door they painted Rose Beige. Sergei's young wife had just delivered. The paint dried evenly quickly but not quickly enough to let me lock the doors and leave, so Ned came to my house bearing a twelve-pack of Peroni in green bottles, Christmas colors of Italy on the carton. We sat in yard chairs near the pansies in the pot my mother gives me in May. We etched our last deep conversation on two stair steps. By July, the pansies bush in the heat like untamed pasta. I let them grow and do not cut them. The mass, the tangle of green threads leads to white magenta blooms.

