

Two Hundred Fifty

by Ann Bogle

Sometimes I think we are in it all together, responsible to each other and for what happens to one another. We can prevent suicides. Other times I think this thinking is jaded, that having strange longings for world peace is unjustified. Happier and more optimistic people than I feel we are not in it for peace, not responsible for war or suicide. One million people die every year at their own hand, the hand that swallows the pills or plies a knife or loops a noose or turns on the gas. It amounts to more deaths than homicide and war combined. For every person who dies alone that way, another twenty try. An attempt that leads to death is called “completed.” I think it affects rent. The dead guy is not the bad guy, the only bad guy in a serene film about beauty, the living not the good guys on a team that wins at war. He is in his own category. He carries a name or label. He has a “profile” under law. In China it's women. Some people are against fear. I am more against hate than against love. Someone will try to tell you that love is a sickness. Someone is always diagnosing.

I walked and then I ran. I was in the woods on a paved path and couldn't tell how long a block was: I just ran from tree to tree, blue racing line to blue racing line, thinking of kilometers.

