

Two Little Fictions

by Gary Hardaway

Thursday Morning at Resolution Café

"Good morning, Lydia! So nice to see you looking well. And how are you, friend of Lydia I haven't met?"

"Good morning to you, too, Max. This is Rachel. We just started working together this week."

"Lovely to meet you, Rachelle," he said, extending his hand.

"Hi, Max. It's Rachel. Just plain, old, Rachel."

He shook once, vigorously, smiled broadly, and turned to order his coffee.

"Lindsay, he called you Lydia. And gave my name a French pronunciation. What's his problem?"

"Oh, Max is fine—best graphic designer I've ever worked with. He just has his own way of seeing others. Who am I to change his vision?"

Mission

His work was done. For sixty years, beginning soon after his seventeenth birthday, he had listened to the gods- good, bad, somewhere in between- and captured for human sight and hearing the thousand poems they wanted him to capture. He was tired, used up, and alone. He knew there were thousands more poems the gods could hum to other someones. But his portion had been heard and neatly transcribed onto the bright, white paper in twelve point Times New Roman- the preferred size and font of the gods- and the two thousand sheets were carefully stacked in the five, pristine, stationery boxes and sealed with brown butcher paper, crisply mucilaged, and labeled in his fine calligraphic hand.

He lay down and never again awakened.

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