

1979

The Spa of the Posthumous

Sandra McPherson

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview>

Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

McPherson, Sandra. "The Spa of the Posthumous." *The Iowa Review* 10.4 (1979): 27-27. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.2517>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Review by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact lib-ir@uiowa.edu.

The Spa of the Posthumous ·
Sandra McPherson

They have prepared the mud. We try
 The rest cure, the thorn house, the inhalatorium.
The men tip their hats, women twirl
Their canes to each other on the walk.
 Green and sky, pink sun canopies . . .
We drink the pumped waters. The orchestra tromps.

I like the continuous balcony. Each room
 Has antlers (antelope and roe deer),
Pewter jug, pewter plate, pewter bottle.
I get the pewter bowl from over the wainscoting,
 Ladle bouillon from the tub in the hay-box.
I unfold the bed, draw the deep

Red pullman curtains. When I sleep
 I am further along the family tree:
I can hardly remember the low German.
I hear lo of angels, low
 Chatter gulfs my pink casket.
But it's really not finished: the digger has

Not quite prepared my therapeutic mud.
 A shovel leans against a tree
Behind the family. Look at their caution!—
Wary of the rootless fly-green grass-cloth
 They step up on to worship,
Afraid it is hollow underneath . . .

I remember a brink like that: the day I watched them dig
 A man who was building our sewer
Out of the landslide.
They were looking for his black hand
 In the lithosphere, for the slope
Of his hard hat. Now they are looking

For us all, the peachy bath attendants
 Digging us out. Help me sir;
Give me your arm as I step to the duckboards,
Take the handshower to my old skin
 To separate the clay
From what I know as myself.