

1980

# Anonymous Collaboration

Ginny MacKenzie

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Anonymous Collaboration ·  
Ginny MacKenzie

He places a handkerchief,  
washed of its initials, near  
the phone. It's 2 p.m. She'll call—  
she's called every day for years.  
He's never seen her but  
thinks he loves her.  
"I'm wearing my satin dress.  
Satin." He tries to answer  
but she's hung up.  
A drop of blood stains  
his handkerchief; he's bit  
his lip again.

Once when he asked her  
to describe herself, she said:  
"You preached a good sermon today,  
Gipsy Peters . . . Gipsy?  
I need to confess."  
He's not a preacher but he  
could forgive her, could say  
come to church or here; but  
she hangs up.

If he checks into the hospital—  
an amnesiac, wearing the white suit  
she sent him, labeled:  
*For Gipsy Peters on this Special Occasion,*  
she might come, identify him.  
He imagines the steps to his house,  
moist heelmarks nearly covered by now.

The door is open. She's read his mail.  
A note on the nightstand reads:  
"G.P., your only identification is  
the past. Go back. Snow is satin  
falling on your house." It's 2 p.m.  
The phone rings. "Gip-sy?  
Gipsy Peters, I've loved you  
all my life." He tries to answer  
but she's hung up.