



2004

Making the Things That Make Man's Life Better

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Recommended Citation

Van Winckel, Nance. "Making the Things That Make Man's Life Better." *The Iowa Review* 34.1 (2004): 18-18. Web.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.5793>

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*Making the Things
That Make Man's Life Better*

A rare day of opened
curtains, and the crowd in the street
for once not squabbling
but squinting, watching
the blue-robed dons lift small flutes.

Their backs to the ornately leaded-
glass windows, the old men
made the music ascend
...from plush blue depths, pitched
toward steeper and
steeper heights, landing at last
on a precipice, where the players
embrace—as if after long battle
a truce has been signed.

On a marble table the flutes lay
shining like silver needles
through which an impetus for great things
once surged. The crowd is slow
to disperse. We stare up. Slow
to drain back into our lives
like oil into water.