1980

Anonymous Collaboration

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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.