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A Phantom of Delight

Michael Heffernan

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A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT

Father liked reading Wordsworth in the bathroom in a great voice, pitching his vagrant tent among the unfenced regions of his brain. He hated Wordsworth like a pestilence. One of his favorite tactics of derision was to recite the scriptures mockingly. There was a tang of mockery in the air, a vibrancy of mockery through the door. Once he was at this long enough, maybe the better part of a good hour or so, another sound would rise amid the din of his locution, curling onto it and then all through it like a wisp of smoke, as from another life we both had lived, a bar in Ensenada where the beer was kept in ice in buckets on the table and the smoke hung like a blue veil over us, wavering when she walked in from the street to sit beside the window in the stillness after the laughter and the songs died down.