

5-1-2016

## Paper Anniversary // Brass Band Epithalamion // On Losing My Wedding Ring While Planting an Orchard

Dante Di Stephano  
*Binghamton University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://knightscholar.geneseo.edu/gandy-dancer>



Part of the [Poetry Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Di Stephano, Dante (2016) "Paper Anniversary // Brass Band Epithalamion // On Losing My Wedding Ring While Planting an Orchard," *Gandy Dancer Archives*: Vol. 4: Iss. 2, Article 40.  
Available at: <https://knightscholar.geneseo.edu/gandy-dancer/vol4/iss2/40>

This Postscript is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at KnightScholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Gandy Dancer Archives by an authorized editor of KnightScholar. For more information, please contact [KnightScholar@geneseo.edu](mailto:KnightScholar@geneseo.edu).

# Postscript

DANTE DI STEFANO

# Paper Anniversary

Marriage is a new way of telling time  
against chronology. It is the end  
of *please* rewritten in indigo ink  
on the tip of our tongues. It is how *thanks*  
will paint all of the hospital walls blue  
in our newborn dreams of dying alone.  
It is light that stags the doe in transit  
through the underbrush and brings her to still  
herself at the snapped twigs scrunched underfoot.  
It is bunny hop and a pocket watch  
that will travel through dresser drawers unused  
until one day it finds itself become  
heirloom and shining. It is a promise  
that calls into question the visible  
colors of the ultraviolet spectrum.  
It cattails the breeze in marshland evenings  
and smacks the warble out of the red-winged  
blackbird's beak that serenades our footsteps.  
It is, in fact, done with all serenades,  
all indigos, all vaults and vestibules  
of autumns reimagined on leaf stems.  
It's as useful as knowing how to change  
a car battery or a toilet's chain.  
It is the most unromantic knowledge  
of the greening need at the heart of so  
much aging ahead. It's: "I no longer  
mind cleaning the bathroom sink tonight."

It's you switching your toothpaste brand to mine  
without hesitation. It's the word *help*  
become holy, memorized as a prayer.  
It's what most outwalks us when we walk out  
the door together into days laddered,  
like the fine blue lines on loose leaf paper,  
with the things we are supposed to do now  
that we are who we are supposed to be.

DANTE DI STEFANO

# Brass Band Epithalamion

While the sousaphones, walking the bass-line,  
groove on a riff, and the crescent moon casts  
crumbs of light like a screwdriver on  
a cymbal attached to a bass drum played  
by a kid in a varsity jacket  
and camouflage pants, while the three trombonists  
hurl salvos at the crowd on the corner  
of Chartres and Frenchman, while twin trumpets  
punch pins into the umbrella of our  
hand-in-hand understanding of the dark,  
while teenage boys, sag and swagger, waggle,  
cakewalk, strut and bump, to the snare drum's roll,  
I am content to contemplate streetlights  
with you and to wave the white handkerchief  
in time with the wedding march that breaks down  
across boarded up storefronts and holds us  
in a levee of melody more true  
and insistent than your pulse, my heartbeat,  
our hemoglobin adjudicating  
evening. In the small hours that follow, you  
will whistle "I'll Fly Away" on the banks  
of the Mississippi and I'll outlook  
the strain a busking violin puts on  
my memories of imagined futures,

but for now we listen on the dancing verge  
and nothing can curb the sound of this band  
as it plays "I Ate Up the Apple Tree,"  
welcoming us to the Mardi Gras of  
an Eden we'll be forever leaving.

DANTE DI STEFANO

# On Losing My Wedding Ring While Planting an Orchard

That this small band of white gold has been lost  
among the roots of saplings, which will grow  
and, perhaps, shoot a finger through the hoop  
that will choke the bark coasting underground,  
is no small consolation; that the hooves  
of deer will silk the dirt above it now  
and at the hour of my death, and of yours,  
is a brittle thought that breaks like hills  
whose trees cycle through a blaze of autumns.

That my friend, whose orchard this is, will let  
his little daughters build imaginary  
kingdoms between the rows where an empire  
of apples will one day scud what once was  
pasture, and that our initials will be  
buried, unacknowledged, beneath their dreams  
and beside their father's hope, is a swan  
that origamis the endless mountains.

I will buy a new ring and remember  
how the original, encased in earth,  
hooping worm and rock and root and desire,  
remains unbroken, a tracing of loam,  
subterranean, shining in the dark  
that gallops and gallops still underfoot.