

## Maxine Gadd / TWO PROSE PIECES

### LEGEND

the kid hit it down to the glaciers

Skyscraper Mother had kept him, but somehow, his long gone father's crazy ache, a tooth ache of all his bone, riled him enough so that he made motions, and kept making motions and one day in the basement of a scyscraper, a super hip latrine, a sad looking wrangler with a beard and a bandana and a flute on his hip said, "come on. There's a ride."

as it turned out, lucky for the kid, it was the month of June. Even so, large greasy-looking blankets were needed to bear crossing rivers, crossing forests, crossing hills, twisting, stopping, meeting the plains. The back of an open truck was no place for learning what he wanted, because he only wanted to stop, and when it stopped he only wanted to get moving again

the kid hit the glaciers

mind you, i couldn't help noticing  
that something had happened to him  
he still had that way of looking like an angel into the distance,  
and looking at a person, sideways, almost slyly,  
like he knew something about you personally, but he wouldn't tell anyone, no, not for the world, as long as you. . . .  
He still wore his blue jeans low down on his hips, his body was slim, his sandy brown hair curly, his eyes blue, but . . .

now he had a couple of gold teeth and the skin that used to make you want to feel it, bright, smooth, with the bloom of a . . .

the old hands, who'd seen him come and go, one or two who'd even suffered a bad turn, had got a bit burnt, felt the old leathery blister beat once, and then, suddenly smiled

"Been to Buffalo, kid?"

And back

The kid smiled sly and shy and said the same old things.  
No one even now knew how to answer him.

Everything was the same, only a bit shrivelled now and dusty.  
Someone who'd been burned might have looked up and seen  
how much harsher the stars were

## THE HAPPY VISION, GONE

THE happy vision, gone i want to sleep the whole grey day  
now, green lily, a bear becomes a bee, my god laughs, i am proud, no one  
but me notices him whom i formed with my fingers and burned into  
permanence. they see he has cracked twice already, covered with fly  
spots. everyone who has what they want says that pain is a  
mental thing, except when they want something and then they take it, or  
cry or turn cold. won't they accept that we are all one and the same  
flame and make it more beautiful by joining. no they will look at it  
and make you have it alone and turn away to enjoy their scorn I wish  
there were enough Hecate in me to distribute curses, purselane, verbane,  
wolf's bane, bad roots plucked out of a dead eye for which Jesus and  
his yellow train of angels. . . . for it was only out of greed and spite  
and endless humiliation my heart has grown hard at homeless animals  
come whining around my door

and they won't eat soybeans so i throw them out for fear  
of the last plague of fleas my last unloving kindness caused me, self  
pity, old woman's juices sour and stink and it's all endless bad  
rain out of nose and eyes and cunt and mouth and armpits and ears and  
paps and bum and pores and sores and cuts and bites and rivers you  
carve wherever there's anything left that's smooth that might lead some  
wandering angel toward you to forgive the pride that the old dame can at  
least turn into a burning dragon. don't think bitterness can drain  
away any more than the mother's milk when sucked can/turn flowers black  
and tarnish the icons in a young man's mind who despises my circles as a  
web or a golden chain he thinks i can't see is straw

dance and rings for fingers and ears; they want the ancient  
female form to die somewhere there should play maidens like ferns of

the forest far from their city, haughty apes of gods that any woman can see their weakness though no concession made for hers till she lose her soul to keep her womb or all this human air made foul with spleen

say it; what you think; what you want to be true; that you are not anything less than human smiling, a temporary blossoming of the god, sexless, neither happy nor sad, a wandering, warm, vegetal stone whose heart does not break when you tell a lie or kill or touch or plant or write or ride away on the fiery beast into the water. tell this thing so the children can endure a box of monotony, so the children know what to think of flowing blood; no matter that the little god sitting happily in a flower of cobras is stolen; that the dying mind require the breath of ten thousand years to make the real trees flower, that in spite of the warnings our skin is compelled to cling and i must scrap for my name like for bread and silence. and i must resist love to work out these walls. so that Troy falls and travellers weave in and out of earthmounds and Paris remains, sealed crystal and rose gold, but light, lighter, like a spider of fire might weave with water and the Acropolis is blasted and the people keep proud and respect a proper madness and New York, as we all know, must find a final catastrophe, orgasm of Atlantis . . .

Our consolance is that we can remember the dead  
and tell tales