

Sister Memories & more

by [Peter Mladinic](#) (October 2024)



Woman on the Street (Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, 1915)

Sister Memories

Some fortunate few collect rubies,
diamonds, and pearls.
Collecting memories of your beloved
sister Estelle, I find her in the diamond
district, in the Gotham Book Mart,
among shelved memoirs of authors
living and dead, their names on spines
in stacks. She walks out the door
holding a slim hardbound book in her hand,
a book with a glossy blue and white
dust jacket, with black letters, the title
and author's name I can't make out.
It's Estelle's book now, the book
of the departed, the book of the dead,
though she herself is on that street of
diamonds, tiers of diamonds behind glass,
near the Gotham with its books holding
memories on shelves. What book is hers,
what book is in her hand, is for Estelle alone
to know. I know she went down stone
steps and opened a door, only moments
ago, and came out and walked up those
steps onto the street of diamonds
that is her street. A penny for your thoughts,
Estelle, a diamond in your long dark hair.

The Garden

From 1972 till 1975 I was with her, then
I wasn't. The last moment I saw her, 1977.
Now, with another, I want to see and be with
her again. The eyes, nose, mouth I kissed I
want to kiss, I'd say hope to kiss, but there's

a certainty in hope that's missing in want.
"I hope to rule the world" seems delusional.

The Beauty of the Unfamiliar

I moved from the country to the city,
where I knew one person,
and him only casually.
I moved into a big white house
on a corner,
a room on the top floor.
The window view, green treetops.
The white of the house from outdoors
and the green of the trees from indoors,
summer trees.
I first saw M in a room
she visited, across the hall from mine.

I didn't see, that Saturday,
M going downstairs,
out the door, on foot, into the city sprawl
of trees along sidewalks, shops, stores
all new to me. There,
that following winter, I met M.
She spoke her name.
By then, familiar with the city,
I'd made a few friends.
M came up to my room,
that first night, music. Out the window
the winter trees. M's face.

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Pete Mladinic's most recent book of poems, *[Homesick Mortician](#)*, is available from BlazeVOX books. An animals rights advocate, he lives in Hobbs, New Mexico, United States.

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