

[David Meischen: Two Poems](#) [1]

November 30, 2015 [Featured Poetry](#) [2]

That Subtle Knot

They bike to the river together, two men abreast
on the darkening trail. Whisper the word. *Abreast*.
Lips kiss air to make a silent *b*, tongue taps
at teeth for *t*, an aftertaste of desire mingling
with something like prayer, the heartbeat
of the unvoiced word—*abreast, abreast, abreast*—
as if, riding side by side, they share one space, two
hearts pumping to the same beat, like the young
Abe Lincoln and Joshua Fry Speed, awake
in the dark in the bed they shared for years.
Holding hands perhaps, as men once did. Talking
until sleep came, making of words and breath
a bond that does not bind. Did they descend
like Donne's lovers to the anchored ecstasy
of squeeze and release, a spill of essences
into the hush that breathed between them?
The words they left behind say little
of bodies. *Love*, they wrote. *Intimate*.
Heart. But like this pair of bicyclers, lost
to the cooling hush, Abraham and Joshua are gone,
no witness left behind to tell us if they spooned
for warmth against the winter cold. Or touched
all the secret places that can make two bodies one.



Storm Warning

1602 Post Office, Galveston, early September 1974

Five thousand miles away, the gargoyles
hover over Notre Dame. You tell me

they have wings. Crushed shells beneath
our feet, your hand straining against the leash,

between us a Great Dane lunges, between us
the scent of sea, the cries of gulls, your eyes

on me, an invitation. The fruit you brandy
will lift us—cherries, peaches, apricots

fermenting in sugar—desire's fizzy nibble,
fingertips at your top shirt button, tongue tip

to the salt sweat beneath. But the gargoyles
hulk, they do not fly. That lift is a weight

I have not learned to carry, a dream
of free fall, foretaste of mornings waking

to you and sunlight pouring in like judgment.

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Honi soit qui mal y pense. I should have

known you in Paris, where stone carves itself
into shapes of need. The gargoyles test

their wings. You turn to me, your eyes
like undertow, no panic like the panic

of no air, a hurricane tracking toward landfall,
Gulf waters at the seawall, pulling, pulling.

Art Information

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David Meischen has been writing poetry and teaching the writing of poetry for thirty years. He's had poems in the *Southern Review*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *Borderlands*, *Naugatuck River Review*, and elsewhere. He's cofounder of [Dos Gatos Press](#) [4] and coeditor of *Wingbeats* and *Wingbeats II*, collections of poetry writing exercises. David is also a fiction writer, with recent work in the *Evansville Review*, *Gettysburg Review*, and *Valparaiso Fiction Review*. His first published short story appeared in *Talking Writing*; his story "[Agua Dulce](#) [5]" won the 2012 Talking Writing Prize for Short Fiction.

Learn more about David at his website, [Meischen Ink](#) [6].

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[4] <http://www.dosgatospress.org/>

[5] <http://talkingwriting.com/agua-dulce>

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