

fine

—
Stefanie Marlis

Apogee Press
Berkeley · California
2000

waft—to float easily and gently, as on the air, from the Dutch *wachten*, to guard—he attributes his easy-goingness to an easy life. “But,” she says, “your family lost everything in the holocaust, your father died when you were sixteen, and your wife committed suicide.” “Oh, yeah,” he says—a featherweight man of eighty-four—“I never looked at it like that.”

vent—a means of escape or release; an outlet, from the Latin *ventus*, wind—being vulnerable re-pairs those who like the inescapable bruising that comes of trying to escape. A chill wind, still the pear tree's frills stick like snow, like stars to sky, flies to fly paper. Whoosh: we stir each other up; stick. Cooling off, finger-play in a pool of come, a little indoor ice rink: swoosh.

tempering

•
brush against, brush with death

birds bead the balcony
 dawn spires

countless stories of two kids dropped like eggs into hot water

alsoep in your bed, her long beauty
every man could love so long

••
you boarded a ship
no land ho

mostly fate swims beyond character
here is pain's bandwidth, individual as

wasted months of watching one life slip away
about the time the purple sky

found:
a Linda
a pearl
rightawayrightawayrightaway

overboard

fall night: ringing from a night in jail for naught
for not knowing how to leave/her bones into your bones
you stayed
that's all—just as you stayed unilluminated
opening hospital curtains offering:

“Look! It's such a beautiful day.”

•••

reading her Buddhists, the obsessive loop loosens

it happens each ordinary, like a softening stranger,
speaks in molecules
and the prior world seeps
slowly,

a bowl coconut milk soup