

JONATHAN YUNGKANS

Forslin's Jig

a cento after Conrad Aiken's The Jig of Forslin (1916)

Through dream, immortal into another dream, we hold them and so
nothing perishes. Things mused upon are, in the mind, like music—

who laughs, who kills, who cries? The music chatters, the music sighs,
the music sinks and dies. Into the smoldering west the fatigued mind

wanders and forgets. The corners of the ceiling are blown like mist
and through the immortal silence. We may hear the hurrying days

go to join the years. Choral stars, like great clocks, tick and chime—
the jeweled movement of the sky—cold and green and white, poured

in silver. The real world dwindles and grows dim, and under watchful
stars, at last, is gone. The dark world slowly comes to rest. The walls

of the city are rolled away. My veins are streets. Millions of men rush
through them. Wind whistles. We are falling. The night is deep.

ABOUT THE POEM & AUTHOR

“Forslin’s Jig” was created from *The Jig of Forslin* by Conrad Aiken (1916). About the poem and the process of composing it, Jonathan Yungkans writes:

Writing “Forslin’s Jig” followed a reasonably simple process. Begin at the final line of Conrad Aiken’s poem. Read line by line in reverse order. Let intuition do much of the rest for overall logic and flow. I had written another version of “Jig” several years ago, following the same method. This was purely out of love for Aiken’s music and imagery, without my remembering there was such a thing as a cento or “found” poetry. That version has been lost. This one feels more compact, but the narrative curve remains the same overall.

Jonathan Yungkans is the author of *Colors the Thorns Draw* (Desert Willow Press 2018) and *Beneath a Glazed Shimmer* (Tebot Bach 2021). His work has appeared in *Gleam*, *Synkroniciti*, *Panoply*, *High Shelf*, *MacQueen’s Quinterly*, and elsewhere. Jonathan lives in Whittier, California.

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