

Three Poems by Gene McCormick



Venetian Blinds

Flimsy metal Venetian blind strips
can be grabbed and pulled down,
apart, to see outside without using
the drawstring to properly open the blinds,
action not possible when they are made of sturdy
wooden slats.

Oak-stained wooden slats added panache
to Frank Capra's luxury cottage suite
in Napa Valley where the writer-producer-director,
an Academy Award-winner when
many movies were black and white,
locked himself in seclusion to finish
the script for *It's A Wonderful Life*.

Late afternoon California sun through the open-slatted Venetian blinds in the resort cottage creates a noir pattern of black and white strips along the floor, bending up the side wall in the nook area at the rear of the resort cottage.

Parallel lines.

A person could spend hours opening and closing the Venetian blinds to hear them clack.

Sturdy well-engineered and designed oak-stained Venetian blinds are made of the finest materials and such repeated use won't damage them.

It's A Wonderful Life was nominated for five Academy Awards. It won one.



Dead Man Walking

An energetic white Scottie
tugs at his leash as an
elderly man walks him by,
letting the dog stop and sniff.
The man's younger wife,
fiftyish,
keeps pace beside them.
The man is dressed for the clear,
sunny day: broad brim straw hat,
Bermuda shorts, floppy sandals
and a dark green short sleeve shirt.

The three of them move along
the sidewalk at a brisk pace,
though the man is old.
Does he think of dying?
Old men should not think
of dying on clear, sunny days.

The Scottie hesitates at a
younger man on a park bench.
Want to visit, Murph?
the old man asks his dog,
but Murph moves on.

The man on the bench,
sun on his face
and a dog's curiosity,
stretches out flat on the bench.
First time he's ever done that.
He doesn't see the old man's wife
look back at him, twice.



Blood Orange

The blood orange shade of a decorative table lamp, a foot tall, if that, wraps around a low wattage bulb, shedding dim light in its desolate far corner of the restaurant table set for two. The stem is a gilt metal pineapple, standing on end, the base a solid square, as the lamp illumes a basket of bread, butter, silverware and two glasses of wine on a white tablecloth.

The restaurant is not far from the house.

Her face is in shadows, away from the lamp.
We don't connect anymore, she says.

Gene McCormick's latest book, *Obsessions* (Middle Island Press, 107 pp, \$16), a novel in the form of a long narrative poem, is available from Amazon or directly from the author at Genebiz@att.net.