

2014 Third Place Winner
Estelle Wachtel-Torres, M.D. Literary Competition

L'Envie de la Vie
By Henry J. Tyszka

With free will, life is what one makes of it.
What devastates one, another is oblivious.
With free will, death too is what one makes of it.

With free will, how else could Heaven be,
but as we live here?
We are as blessed here as in Heaven we ever could be.

With free will, how else could Hell be,
but as we live here?
We are as damned here as in Hell we ever could be.

Abed one overslept morn,
I contemplated my father's dresser.
It outlasted him.
As it will me.
As it will us all.
Mute and mindless assembly of milled mahogany.
It stands against the wall void of free will.
We can only best its Zen like longevity,
by willing our own movement and growth.

Yet while we will our way through life,
The score to the soundtrack keeps changing.
Forever learning new tunes and steps,
Best it is to dance to our own tune.

What will it be that ends my father's dresser?

What will it be that takes me out?

What will it be that takes you out?

Will we know it when it comes?

It matters not what numbers we play.

The roulette wheel of fate

Has neither digits nor colors on it.

The ball lands where it will.

Standing here surrounded by dying angels.

Nothing to be done for them.

We have gone through our fair share.

Will they be sending in any more?

Notes of a dirge morph into snow,

The flakes fall and smooth over...

Everything.