

Paul Bamberger

Echo on an Empty Playground

all she wanted was nothing more than a smile and a small
secret whispered into her ear that she could pass on and
maybe a little participation

she took the meanness as it came if that's what it takes
and it did wrapped in old lace curtain chasing around the
playground in her pretty dress ghost notes have no
melody

and getting right down to it so many just around the
corner inaccessible shadows sidestepping shapes they
never would take and what to do with the ashes that
aren't there

out the silence torch the shadow drain the rut of longing
slip past the small talk of sideshow barkers laze around a
bit then you must go

go where anywhere but go for what comes next is
slapstick impugning all who would look back all who
would look forward impugning even those who would not
look at all insisting upon least resistance

last cherished moment echo on an empty playground

Mirror

madman mirror's lengthening shadow

a tapping at the window

madman the lost child of the five and tens

a story left untold

madman wits sharpened on the everyday blows

they drive your dream away

madman weather the storms

the dream is meant to be

madman years in the abys

liberte liberte liberte

madman crying out is of no use

hysteria is what brings them here

madman prepare yourself

they are not who they seem to be

Times

to the very edge the wounded
the crowd not letting them off the hook
hysteria drawing the sweetness out of them
small gestures bleeding them dry
dragging them off to the very edge
shadowed sundown drifters
no music in the north wind
in the evening no blackbird singing
only the lowdown joke taking to the very edge
lives of spare change and old fears
walking circles
back to a foregone conclusion

About the Author

Paul Bamberger received an MFA Degree in English from the University of Massachusetts/Amherst and has had several books of poetry published, most recently being *On The Badlands Of New Times*, Deerbrook Editions Publishing (2018).

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