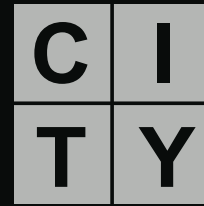


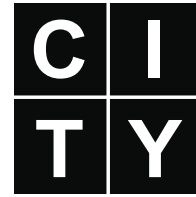
# The broken



**But here's what  
really happened.**

**Major Müller's severed hand  
Red herrings in cream sauce  
Death at the voting booth  
Divulgence of details from beyond the grave!**

# The broken



Winter 2025 | Issue 37

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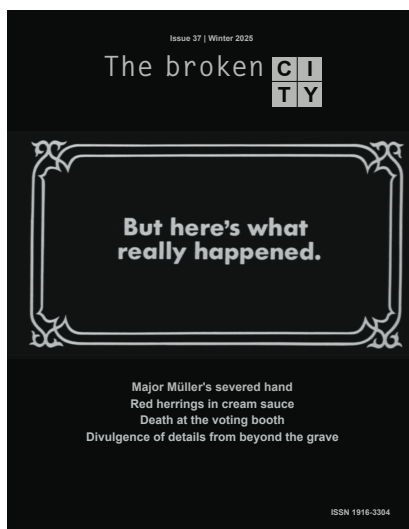
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## In this issue:



Welcome to *The Broken City's* Mystery issue.

How did Poe die? What did the Fox sisters conjure? Was that severed hand really moving?

Peer inside, discover the clues, watch out for that candlestick!

*The Broken City* is currently accepting submissions for its summer 2026 edition: **Abracadabra**.

That's right, readers, the magazine is running a very **Magical** issue. From Harry Potter to Houdini, by sleight of hand or Sabrina—we want to hear about magic, in any way it manifests.

Send your poetry, fiction, essays, illustrations and photography to [thebrokencitymag@yahoo.com](mailto:thebrokencitymag@yahoo.com).

Deadline is: June 1, 2026. Submitters will be contacted after that date, with news of acceptance or rejection.

# In the Old Days of Writing

## *Harrison Fisher*

With a jaunty step,  
a stranger on the street  
waggles his umbrella

at passers-by  
whose faces he dislikes.

He is a red herring  
in cream sauce—  
deli-quescent.

And who are his familiars?  
A bunch as likely as paper poems  
laying about the house,

absorbing each other,  
penned to unpenned,

blank palimpsests  
(we thought we knew each other)  
under the day's prosy clamor

thickly writ  
with a candlestick.

In the parlor.

Beware  
the writerly  
acquaintance  
of colorful name.

---

*Harrison Fisher has published twelve collections of poems, four of them booklength: Blank Like Me, Curtains for You, UHFO, and, most recently, Poematics of the Hyperbloody Real. In 2025 he had new work appear in numerous magazines, including The Basilisk Tree, BlazeVOX, The Drift & Dribble Miscellany, eMerge, New Verse News, and Umbrella Factory Magazine. He lives in upstate New York.*

# NEXT ON DATELINE: *DEATH AT THE VOTING BOOTH*

*Diane Kendig*

A semi-conscious and delirious man found at Gunner's Hall, a Baltimore tavern, is taken to Washington Hospital where a friend, J.E. Snodgrass meets him, shocked at his appearance: filthy shirt, ill-fit bombazine jacket, run-down shoes. Not the dapper attire of the Edgar Allan Poe he knew. Poe's calling for "Reynolds," perhaps recalling his days imprisoned in Siberia after the Greek War and before an American counsel intervened for him. Within four days, Poe is dead, having never regained consciousness, and one Dr. Moran, leaves many rumors but no official cause of death.

[*Man on the street:*]

Well we all know he died of alcohol. A total lush. Druggie too.

[*Susan Pebbles, Poe Scholar:*]

Actually, the story of Poe's alcoholism is greatly exaggerated.

[*Kenny Rose, Editor of "Poe Theories":*]

There have been at least nine causes given for Poe's death. Most recently at a clinical pathology conference, doctors agreed on the cause of death of the unknown case they were given: rabies. The problem with their conclusion is: there was no bite, nor indication of hydrophobia.

Tonight on *DateLine*, we examine the most likely and contributing factors. Rabies will not be among them.

*After the Break: What was America's first great mystery writer doing in the weeks leading up to his mysterious death?*

Preceding his arrival in Baltimore, Poe spent two months lecturing in Richmond, Virginia, where he proposed to wealthy widow Elmira Shelton, who agreed to marry him in New York come October. On September 27th, he left Richmond for Philadelphia to edit a manuscript of prominent writer Marguerite St. Leon Loud (née Barstow), then planned to arrive in New York for the wedding, his suit for the occasion packed in a bag later found in Richmond's Swan Tavern, without the suit. Had Poe gone off the rails of both his itinerary and in his Temperance Pledge to his fiancé?

*After the break: What's Voter Fraud Got to Do with It?*

Cooping. It's an old election trick. You've seen it in *Gangs of New York* when crews haul folks off, beating them, cooping them up, boozing them up, forcing them to vote. Over and over. Changing clothes each time. Now despite what Trump says, we have maybe 31 cases of voter fraud of 155 million ballots cast. Then? Thousands and thousands out of 100,000 ballots. Taverns used for voting like we use schools today. Gunner's Hall? Cornelius Ryan's 4th Ward Polling Place where Poe lay on an election day, inebriated, his spruce clothes switched out for a sad outfit he wouldn't have been caught dead in—and yet was.

*After the break: Cover-up*

In days, Poe's arch-rival Griswold published an obit depicting Poe as a mad, drunken, drug-using lunatic, the way Stephen King's enemies might have described him before his sobriety. But Poe had become a teetotaler by then, both for his beloved and due to his recent health scare. And though Poe's friends denounced the lies, it's the bio that continues even in seventh grade readers with "Ligeia," where it's toned down some. Oh, he may have had a brain tumor, suffered a beating from his captors, and had alcohol forced on him. But the main cause? We say Cooping.

*After the break: Mysteries Abound*

Still some say the death of the master of mystery Remains mysterious. He's buried in Baltimore. Here in Richmond the Swan Hotel's been demolished. No trace of his clothes, so no DNA to trace, no fibers or fingerprints. It's now the Virginia Library. The gift shop sells none of his books, just *Poe for Your Problems*, "darkly inspiring advice" excised by Catherine Baab-Muguira "from history's least likely Self-Help Guru." Care to peruse it with us in the Can-Can Café? No amontillado here, we'll have to have Perrier.

*Diane Kendig's latest poetry books are Woman with a Fan and Prison Terms. She just published an article on Scottish Terriers in WWII and is working on one about Adelaide Simon, a poet associated with Russell Atkins and d.a. levy. Kendig led a college creative writing program including a prison writing workshop for 18 years, and now in retirement she curates Cuyahoga County Public Library's weblog Read + Write ([cuyahogalibrary.org/blog/poetry](http://cuyahogalibrary.org/blog/poetry)) and writes for "Free Poetry Cleveland." You can find her at [dianekendig.com](http://dianekendig.com) and blogging at Diane Kendig: Home Again ([dianekendig.blogspot.com](http://dianekendig.blogspot.com)).*

## **Who Jumped in the Water**

### ***Carla Sarett***

I woke up thinking of a poem I had written,  
but forgotten. All I could recall was  
a poem of great sadness about  
a man who jumped into the water.

No, not a man, but a boy on a summer morning  
when the water was clear and fast moving,  
when the water was cool and delicious,  
when the birdsong was sweet and inviting,  
waking long before his mother and father  
so he could be alone with the birdsong  
naked in the creek they called a river  
cool and delicious in the heat of August,  
when the air was still and hushed  
when no one could see where he was.

The swim would be his secret,  
he would swim for hours and hours  
until his limbs lost power and  
the water's current felt like sleep.  
And he felt the bed of the river,  
heard birdsong above the stillness,  
above the fast-flowing river,  
where other boys had slept.

I know I will never write that poem.  
I will keep it with me like the secret  
of the man who jumped into the water  
who was never seen again.

# The Fox Sisters Hear Taps in Their Bedroom at Midnight

## Carla Sarett

*Rochester New York, 1848*

It's not what we knew but what knew us,  
made us fear the night  
in that rat-infested farmhouse.  
We unlocked the outside gate  
so Father could stumble home from a filthy bar  
force his body inside  
then tried to ignore  
his gin-soaked talk of sin and pride  
that kept us paralyzed in bed. *April Fool's*,  
only a joke, we said ages  
after we'd lost our cash and jewels  
on outrageous  
transgressions, after every card  
and prophesy was fake. Yet that first rap—  
we can't explain what was conjured—  
it's chancy to wake the dead up.

---

*Carla Sarett's latest poetry chapbook, Any Excuse for a Party, is out from Bainbridge Island Press. Her work has been nominated for the Pushcart, Best of Net, Best Microfiction and Best American Essays. Carla serves as Contributing Editor for New Verse Review and earned a PhD from University of Pennsylvania. She is currently based in San Francisco. "The Fox Sisters Hear Taps in Their Bedroom at Midnight" previously appeared in New Verse Review. "Who Jumped in the Water" previously appeared in Bowery Gothic and She Has Visions (Main Street Rag, 2022).*

## Capsule Biography Number 26—Gideon Haarhoff

### *Ben Guterson*

South-African born Gideon Haarhoff, who holds no actual professional title (he taught secondary-level history in Liverpool for a dozen years) and prefers to call himself, simply, “an investigator,” is a skeptic of the scientific rather than philosophic strain. He asserts, uncontroversially, that propositions must be grounded in empirical evidence and does not doubt the attainability of knowledge. His most profound distrust—and the near exclusive focus of his vexation—is of the claims made by alleged psychics, against whom he has waged a three-decade crusade. This endeavor remains, to Haarhoff, both exhilarating and unexpected: in common with many zealots, who end up embittered against that to which they were once devoted, Haarhoff was a committed occultist who, through college, practiced the so-called Gardnerian form of Wicca, consulted astrological charts, and was certain the dead could communicate with the living.

Haarhoff was born in Cape Town in 1931. His father was a schoolteacher and his mother a seamstress; his maternal grandfather was revealed, posthumously, as a charlatan herbalist. When Haarhoff was 14, he suffered a debilitating bout of encephalitis lethargica and was housebound for 15 months. An uncle gave him two books that proved decisive: Jean Hugar’s classic work on sleight of hand, *The Royal Road to Card Magic*, and P.D. Ouspensky’s *A New Model of the Universe*. Haarhoff mastered the former work’s techniques and became an accomplished card magician; the muddled esoterica of Ouspensky’s book aroused in Haarhoff a fascination with mysticism coupled with a latent contempt for the unprovable.

Haarhoff afforded his tuition at the University of Cape Town by performing as an occasional mentalist and magician at carnivals and children’s parties. He became active in a local Wicca group when he was 18, initiating a breach with his parents. When he was 20, he had a two-hour out-of-body experience that confirmed for him, through an incontrovertible immediacy, the fact of psychic experience. After a move to England, where he became a teacher of history to teenagers, and following a handful of years spent in an attempt to understand the foundations of what he called his “dramatic astral interlude,” Haarhoff moved to a position of absolute skepticism regarding psychic phenomena. “I searched the literature,” Haarhoff has written, “I had endless conversations with fellow travelers and academics, and I listened to my own conscience. There’s no doubt I had a powerful experience, but it was—I now feel—a type of waking dream. I determined that believers in the paranormal are engaged in little more than delusional or wishful thinking, and their claims are generally error laden or fraudulent.”

Since 1957, Haarhoff has held membership in the Society for Skeptical Inquiry. He became executive director of the organization in 1967 and left his teaching position. The majority of his time since has been spent in investigating claims of psychic phenomena in Europe and North America, interviewing alleged mediums and psychics, authoring articles for both academic and lay audiences about the Society’s work, and lecturing on the Society’s efforts. He gained renown in 1973 when, on an episode of the British talk show *Parkinson*, Haarhoff challenged self-professed Azerbaijani mystic Rustam Ibragimov to demonstrate his alleged powers of telekinesis, a confrontation orchestrated by host Michael Parkinson. Ibragimov, under conditions arranged by Haarhoff, failed to bend a spoon, rustle the pages of an open book, or disturb a bowl of water before angrily departing the set.

In 1974, Haarhoff, after solving three puzzles offered to him in a letter from a representative of the Lisbon Circle, accepted enrollment in the group. “On the surface, yes, I seem an unlikely member,” Haarhoff has written. “But I provide balance. I am a corrective. How many organizations openly embrace such a range



of views, such a range of positions? Dissent was identified by Agrippa as one of the sceptic's five modes, and though his take on it was in service of radical skepticism, I see dissent as an essential part of the journey to truth. We can disagree without killing each other. In fact, we should disagree."

A small if curious inconsistency in Haarhoff's absolutism seemed to arise when, following an address in Stockholm in 1984, he was asked about the possibility of life after death. "I find myself inclining toward Spinoza on the matter," Haarhoff answered. "Some impersonal aspect of the individual may survive."

A clue to this seeming discrepant position may be found in an article Haarhoff wrote for the Canadian semi-monthly *Open Inquiry* in 1977 in which he wrote, "I have, over my many years of investigating such matters, encountered four or five incidents where—I confess—I find myself stymied. These are all regarding contact with the dead and entail the divulgence of details from 'beyond the grave,' so to speak where the possibility of coincidence feels too great to countenance. I cannot explain them but am unwilling to state they provide proof of either a soul or the continuance of consciousness beyond death."

At the close of a presentation to the Belgian organization Comité Para in September of 1985, Haarhoff stated he had received a recent message—the contents of which he did not disclose—from spiritualist and author Hugo Carvalho. When asked if he had misspoken, given that Carvalho had died in Santiago five months earlier, Haarhoff declined to clarify, instead stating, "As we all know, the argument from infinite regress is both irrefutable and irresistible."

It's unclear if Haarhoff was being obtuse or if he was subject to a momentary crisis of confidence. There is no doubt that the dilemma at the heart of the skeptic's position—the certainty that there is no certainty—may lead, perhaps inevitably, to disquiet or despair.

*Sembla Intelligencer*, August 4, 1988

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*Ben Guterson's writing includes the Edgar Award-nominated middle-grade novel Winterhouse (Holt/Macmillan) and the New York Times bestseller The World-Famous Nine (Little, Brown/Hachette). His stories have appeared in several literary journals, including Burningword, BlazeVOX, Superpresent, Funicular, and SORTES.*

# The Hand of Major Müller

## *by Paul Verlaine, translated by Robert Boucheron*

"Ah, that Hans with his theories!"

Like a discordant chorus, this was the exclamation of ten or fifteen young gentlemen of the house, clay pipes in their teeth, and in front of each on the oak table in the tavern, an immense stein filled with bock beer.

The student thus challenged turned out to be a tall young man with a great beard and long hair under an unremovable little cap of velvet, and dressed in a frock coat with embroidered loops, leather pants, and Russian boots à la Suvorov. But his pale face and his whole figure, more slender than is the custom among this assembly of future doctors who tend to be stout, denoted a lofty mind and perhaps a superior soul.

"Don't laugh, gentlemen," he said, "and consider this. In support of my thesis, which is, I insist, the affirmation of a solidarity existing even after a violent separation between the members of a body and the body itself, I will tell you a little story."

"We are listening, and try to be amusing," vociferated a skeptical comrade. After this in a steady voice, Hans began.

"I was often in the company of Major Müller, who was in his time, as you know, a notable player at our seaside resorts. I knew him from my earliest childhood. He was an old friend of the family, and each time he came to visit, he never failed to bring me lots of treats. When I got to be a big boy, it was books of all sorts, chiefly novels and works on military arts, that he gave me.

"I want you to grow up one day to be a field marshal," he often said to me while twisting my ear. Then, when I reached adolescence, he made me presents of weapons.

"Therefore I had for him an affectionate respect, which allowed me, once I was no longer a complete greenhorn, to speak in the French manner, to enter his very gracious intimacy. For he was

a charming man, if I may use that expression, in the style of those French devils, and even more. Anyway, quite debauched, he loved women, drink, and gaming, but gaming and drink even more than women."

"Not without reason, perhaps," observed Fritz, a large fellow.

Hans resumed.

"It was precisely in regard to a gaming quarrel, and not for a lady, as claimed by others who have no authority, that having been insulted, he fought a duel by the sword in which he killed his adversary. But he himself received a slash on the wrist, so grievous that despite early symptoms that were the not in the least worrisome, he was obliged to have the right hand amputated. By a strange caprice, the Major did not want to separate himself from this organ that had served him well, in a manly fashion, you understand. To this end, he had it thoroughly saturated in spirits and injected with a potent balm, and he kept it under a crystal globe in his bedroom."

"Ha, ha, what a good joke!"

"Fritz, will you be quiet until the end?"

"I still see it, this dry and hairy hand of an old soldier. I see them again, those shriveled fingers, feverish in their immobility, you might say, like a terrible unbridled player at rest. And what rest, on the red and green velvet of a cushion with golden tassels. The flesh, if this object so cruelly and fantastically strange may be called by the name of flesh, the flesh, I say, that you might believe had turned to ice under the brown parchment that had been skin, naturally had no shiver of life, but it would have made you shiver, if you will kindly forgive the apparent bad taste of this nevertheless necessary description. On the ring finger, a large ring displayed a heavy ruby, which the sun or a lamp or the flickering of resinous flames from the grandiose fireplace singularly illuminated. The nails, cut square in the military fashion, had imperceptibly grown since

the fatal amputation. And large, thick, vigorous for all that, and nervous in a ferocious way, the hand slept there for years, under savage trophies, among massive jewels: pistols with damascened handles, daggers with silver sheaths and old brass, signets of bizarre device, on a table of rosewood.

"The hand slept there for years, until the Major was confined to bed, on the threshold of the illness that would carry him off, as stated by our dear and illustrious professors, most of whom were consulted, you will not forget, in this circumstance. But here is the truth."

And pronouncing these last words, Hans's voice suddenly became grave, slow, I was going to say solemn, and I would not be far wrong. In this tone, at all events, he resumed his tale.

"I was summoned to the Müller house, in part because I was a young yet intimate friend of the Major, and by his wish, and also in part because I was a student of Doctor Schnerb, who presided, you will remember, over the innumerable conferences held by our illustrious and dear professors around this memorable bedside. But in the first instance, the chief reason was that the patient asked me to watch with him every two nights.

"The case required frequent rubbings for which the strongest salves were indispensable, and the night table no less than the bureau was cluttered with so many lotions and potions, in great disorder, it was difficult to reconnoiter.

"A fatal negligence! Or rather not, for it appears that if things had been otherwise disposed, the result would have been the same."

"Get to the result, then, with no more oratorical precautions!"

"Herr Fritz, for the last time, is requested to remain quiet."

These words always like a chorus, like those in the same vein reported above, made

palpable now a kind of impatient interest. Hans continued.

"I pass on to the final days of the Major, days which were only a prolonged agony. The extraordinary strength of the invalid made him go through every possible horror: fever, chills, cramps, delirium, especially delirium. Oh, my comrades, what delirium! At one moment cries of command, of military enthusiasm, like fiery chants of war-like fury, of masculine rage in the German style of Blücher. The next moment smiles and the unequivocal gestures of a man who runs after women and treats them without ceremony but not without passion. Then card declarations, rolls of dice, bets and surmises on all the roulettes of creation. In brief, a crazy kind of spoken autobiography, as one might say, the microcosm of a personality.

"These highly alarming advance symptoms ceased all of a sudden, and you might believe the patient entered the comatose phase, but you would be wrong. A reaction of the liveliest sort having occurred, a surprising improvement followed. I almost expected the beginning of a convalescence.

"Well, one evening when I came to take my place at the bedside, our Müller slipped into drowsiness and finished by falling asleep in a deep and healthy slumber. As for me, I was reading in an armchair.

"To manage the care of the patient, the chamber had been rendered dim by tall window curtains of dark green. It had a high ceiling, and hung on the walls were tapestries representing country revels and shepherd's frolics. Here and there were miniatures of women and portraits of superior officers on foot. This composite decoration, a mélange of warrior and voluptuary, was not without an impressive effect, especially in the twilight of the curtains by day, and in the glow of the alabaster nightlight during nocturnal hours.

"I distinctly remember that what I was reading was by Jomini, a relic of the excellent taste of the Major in military matters, communicated to me so long ago, and a subject that suggested the fantastic so little, a lesser degree is impossible. Nevertheless, little by little I felt myself slip into somnolence, and I decided to abandon it for a while, since the patient needed nothing at the moment. All the same, I thought it well to go look at him at close range. I verified that his breathing was regular, and his sleep was easy, like that of a child. I returned to my seat with eyes by chance turned toward the corner where the table stood. On it rested the hand.

"The chamber, I have said, was lit only by a suspended nightlight. The hand seemed to move. 'A funny effect of wanting to sleep,' I said to myself, and I approached with an inward smile."

"And the hand kept moving?" curiously hummed that animal named Fritz.

This time, no one took notice of the interruption, and Hans, after having imbibed a little beer from his mug with its tin lid, resumed.

"Yes, gentlemen, the hand kept moving, or at least to me it seemed to move. The fingers raised and lowered one by one or all together, in a sense that was different and *intelligent*. They uncramped, in a word, from a long numbness.

"This time I stopped in surprise, nailed to the carpet, so to speak, angry with myself or rather angry at my own organism for such an aberration. The hand continued, I can only say *continued*, and you will see that I can only express myself thus, to move more and more, as if returning to strength and direction. I could take this no longer, and wanting to have a clean heart, I lifted the crystal globe that covered the strange object, and exposed the latter to the open air. Did it not turn at once on its stump of a wrist, covered by an ample sleeve of lace! And closing its other fingers except for the thumb, did it not signify with the index that I should return to my seat! The gesture was imperious. It was that of a military chief designating a post, to go take it up without delay and without explanation.

"You smile, Fritz. I assure you that at this moment, I hardly wanted to smile, and even less to think of the revolting absurdity of this vision.

"Without believing a bit of it, in spite of what my eyes saw, I was dumbfounded, and since the end of my tale will render me dumb, I admit I was terrified. So much that I retreated to my armchair, where I fell perforce, eyes fixed for all the world on the hideous object which now, to crown my horror, stretched its fingers and retracted them, as though to make magnetic passes.

"Shall I confess to you? Yes, I say it again, since the event soon absolved me from the obvious crime of credulity. I felt turned to stone, riveted to the armchair, incapable of movement. At the same time, the calm glow of the nightlight faded and became horribly white, of which only electricity can give an imperfect idea. Something like a luminous shimmer but more greenish, more moon-like, widened, and a kind of indefinable noise or lugubrious music, it seemed, of muffled drums and muted trumpets and very distant organ pipes wept, swelled, and flowed in vague waves, haunting and endless.

"All of a sudden, the hand stood erect on its cushion, balanced an instant back and forth, and forth and back, took flight, and jumped to the ground like a cat, without the least noise. On the carpet, again like a cat, it bounded by nimble movements up and down, and down and up, until it arrived near the night table. In one leap it was on the marble top, where it groped among the bottles, uncorked one of them, took hold of it, and poured a few drops into the water glass. Then it crawled up to the nose of the sleeper and pinched it in such a way that he awoke with a sneeze. The hand plunged into the white and black of the sheets, then jumped to the ground, where I could not follow it with my glance, as all my attention thenceforth was concentrated on the patient. He spoke:

"How thirsty I am!"

"And before I could rise from the armchair, held back by I know not what diabolical force, to

my immense and unspeakable horror, he seized the water glass and drank.

"At that precise instant, I felt released in some way, and I ran to the bed, where I could only verify the immediate death of the Major. Without indulging in useless efforts, I looked at the bottle which the hand had employed. (I am compelled to speak in this manner.) It contained a powerful poison, a medication meant for external use only, and it had been left by mischance among the herbal infusions and vials of julep syrup.

"I was overwhelmed, as you may well think, and several minutes passed before all my senses regained their function. Once they did, I thought at once of notifying the Major's next of kin, but before rushing out the door, by instinct I glanced at the table where the hand was customarily displayed. The hand was there under glass, just as it had been for years and years."

"A good farce! Hans, my friend, you had a vivid hallucination, that's all."

"The fact is, as a hallucination, it is princely and even royal."

"Indeed, *divinum aut potius diabolicum*."

Hans concluded:

"The death was attributed to normal causes. The burial took place, and days passed. I was obliged to go to the Müller house for different reasons. I did not fail to *observe* the hand, which remained in the mortuary chamber, unfrequented since the catastrophe, and I verified without surprise, yes, without surprise, and treat me as mad if you wish. (I have read and reread a heap of volumes of which even the titles are unknown to you, sages that you are!) I verified without surprise a remarkable deliquescence in the tissues and musculature. Only the bone structure remained unscathed, a

reproach, dominating more and more. Symptoms of decomposition came on, spots, limpness, etc. One day—excuse me, the memory fills my heart with horror and disgust—one day I saw *worms*."

"Pouah! Enough, enough!"

"Sit down, sit down!"

"No matter, it's true, just as it's true that here we are, alive!"

Having said this, our storyteller departed, happy and quite proud of the effect he produced, while his comrades remained with mouths agape and stared at each other. Some were almost frightened, and others almost laughed. All were visibly struck, and a discussion seemed about to emerge from their silence, when Fritz, ever the skeptic, said:

"Let's drink a defiant glass of schnapps.

That will purify the air."

"Good idea!"

And until cock crow, I can affirm to you at no cost to myself, they tossed off many a bumper.

And so ends the story of the hand of Major Müller.

\* \* \*

Suvorov—Alexander Suvorov, 1730-1800, was a Russian general and author of military manuals. He won every battle he fought, and he raised the military glory of Russia to its highest peak.

Blücher—Gebhard Leberecht von Blücher, 1742-1819, Prussian general who fought Napoleon at Leipzig in 1813 and at Waterloo in 1815.

Jomini—Antoine-Henri Jomini, 1779-1869, Swiss army officer in French and later Russian service, and a celebrated writer on the Napoleonic art of war.

*divinum aut potius diabolicum*—Latin for "divine or rather diabolical."

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*Robert Boucheron is a retired architect in Charlottesville, Virginia. His stories, essays, book reviews, poems, and translations have appeared in Alabama Literary Review, Bellingham Review, Fiction International, Literary Heist, Saturday Evening Post and Zodiac Review. He won a paid fellowship to the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts in January 2025.*

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