

The New Criterion

Poems October 1996

Bijou and Majestic

by Richard Tillinghast

Snow from the first of November, snow
Darkening the already dark December
Sky over Montpelier. We stamped into the Bijou
Through slush, having nowhere to go other
Than my aunt's, or back to the farm. Images
Blizzarded through unfiltered smoke out of the
Fluttery projector's light-beam—
Hollywood soup for a twenty-below afternoon.

Satin flowed along Harlowe's thighs, men
In smoking jackets fingered cigarette holders,
B-52s droned low over Tokyo amid wet wool
Indoors-smells steaming in the stalls of the Bijou.

Out on the main street as evening closed in
We walked back together wrapped
In the full dark of the Green Mountains,
Haloed by our breath, upstairs to that little
Maid's room your job at the Majestic
Gave you, and an iron bed with white sheets.

If I were still young and stupid enough
I would try to say
what we were to each other then.

The Green Mountains whitened at the rim
Of our awakening, through a diamond-shaped window,
Its frame painted summer-camp green.

Richard Tillinghast's five nonfiction books include *Finding Ireland* (University of Notre Dame Press).

This article originally appeared in The New Criterion, Volume 15 Number 2 , on page 39

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