

## Three Pieces by Frank Cavano

### **I. Fear Itself**

Walking on tree trunks, pounding the wooden walkway until it shrieks, a pair of senior ladies discuss ways to improve their health, where to buy a good tomato and evening dinner plans. Behind them, walking on sticks, two men, slim with cardiac concern, worry about taxes and the hurricane season and argue about which liquid establishment makes the best dirty martini.

A bit farther back, an elderly couple turtles along helping each other, old bones groaning, take one sad step at a time while planning still another European trip and believing they will not pass from this orb with plans made and the trip not taken.

Ahead on a bench, pocket full of bottled pills, soft cervical-collared me watches the parade of fears and denials snake through the morning on the wooden walkway. I greet them with empathic smiles and waves knowing I but see myself. and waves knowing I but see myself.

## **II. James and Jude\***

James and Jude, sadly gone of a sudden Sunday.

Crash. A lovely leaving as one, father and son.

Still, in this world of raging roulette we who

remain ever long for their ghosts.

Ah, but Heaven shall wipe away all tears when we

meet again, soul to soul, somewhere

somewhere out there in Rumi's field.

## **III. Bench Talk**

On the bench where he had been sitting with the Live Oak late in the afternoon she took a seat. He nodded kindly. She began to talk: of the exquisite texture of the Magnolia blossom; of the Spanish Moss above their heads; of the lump in her breast, the biopsy and the waiting for the doctor's verdict; of She-Crab Soup and her son's close call at Virginia Tech where the mass killings had taken place; of how lovely the sun felt on her skin this day; of two marriages, now history, and her fear of another relationship.

With soft, soft eyes he answered each pain and with twinkling eyes each veneer of pleasure. She continued to speak going backwards in her memory: her first love, who loved her not; an unexpected pregnancy and how she disposed of it. To their left a Snowy Egret landed to fish at the edge of the lagoon. She pointed and commented on its' white perfection. He nodded kindly. The Egret swallowed and she did likewise as she told of her daughter's passing from a brain tumor before her twentieth year. Again he smiled kindly and knowingly. There were other things to tell and she told them, her story punctuated by the singing of birds, the wind in the trees, his smile and the ever-so-gentle nodding of his head.

When she had told it all she took a very deep breath and, for the first time, looked him straight in the eye. "Its' been a long, long, hot summer", she

sighed. “Yes”, he smiled. And now, her burdens reduced at last, she thought as she left: “that man is a brilliant conversationalist.”

Author Bio: Frank Cavano is a retired psychiatrist who writes because it is an enjoyable experience and, often, a healing one as well. His poems and other writings are often of a spiritual/inspirational/metaphysical nature. He tries to be a faithful, empathic observer of the human condition in all his efforts.

\* James was my wife's nephew and Jude his son. They went out for ice cream on a Sunday about three years ago and were killed in an automobile accident. Imagine.