

Getting there is part of it. Away from the main roads, into the woods, branching off on smaller, ruttier roads shrouded in late winter mist. We stopped by a snowbound pond, a limitless space of white; the mist hid the other shore.

Four identical figures clad in formal black suits, white collars bound with black ties, white gloves and big snow boots stomped onto the snow pond. Knitted orange hoods with eye and mouth holes covered their heads. They stood still, arms folded. As the electronic music began they opened and folded their arms in mechanical gestures. They were like 1984 music box figures. All their movements were in stiff patterns, conforming like a drill. Arms and legs moved in unison faster and faster until the pace became frantic. Now they were frightened, they looked up at the sky and tried to protect themselves from falling ~~down~~^{up}. Still they tried to conform and placate, saluting and running in single file trying to goose-step. Suddenly they were frozen in mid-gyration for a space of time. Then they stepped back and stood straight, facing each other. All together fell prone on the snow. Hands reached out to grasp hands, bodies curled to one another.

Slowly they arose and again stood facing each other. One by one the hoods were peeled off, hair fell free and new faces were revealed. The hard black coats were flung away and the white gloves. Hands that could ^{now} feel unbound the black ties and unbuttoned the white shirts. They began to dance, the movements coming from inside themselves and flowing naturally together. The white

shirts floated about their figures like wings, like the first flight of spring breaking out of the dark shell of winter. Each one accepted the end as part of the dance, kneeling, head down, cradled in the pond of snow.

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Emily Jennison
March 19, 1982

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