

1943

The Progress of Photography

Byron Vazakas

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The same flesh, the skittish nose
 Curved to the ground: an indelicate weed,
 And irregular faces are known, memorized
 And served in an unusual sky
 As marks by which we navigate
 And journey past these air fields
 To craters torn from darkness.

Over roofs: the carpet is
 A remnant of our childhood Bagdad:
 As never-sleep comes haunting with its swing
 Pouring the night back upon the proud
 And all our wandering steps merge
 Into the military, the accents rhymed
 Though divisible into separate hopes,
 And the body dreams against the curtain
 Yet the play is (by what dim coincidence) the same,
 Veritably the one we have lived before.
 Cascades and oranges about our eyes
 Conspire to move this massive time
 When spires are blocks that tumble over
 The picturesque, O awkward domes

Illusion:
 Come with me to home.

JESS H. CLOUD

THE PROGRESS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Slowly I mount the stairs to have
 my picture taken. And in the
 slightly dusty room, a shabby
 modern chair celebrates the

Funereal ceremony with artificial
 cheer. The occasion is a New
 Year, uncertain, melancholy,
 but hoping for a better than

The last. It is medieval. It is
a world mad with carving, where
time confers pain like a fungus
on the face. Reflectors are

Arranged, the lights focussed for
the most auspicious view.
Disturbingly, my face repeats
the past. It should not have

Been there, or was only, as air
imagines sound. Now I am ready,
and the camera makes what is seen
seem what I feel. In the dark-

Room, my features gradually emerge,
less indistinct, and slowly I
perceive familiar things take
unfamiliar shapes: my portrait

Becomes the likeness of another.
Quiet and persistent as pain,
time's lens records its fatal
photograph, enlarged and

Cancerous; and I am the terrible
invalid, trapped within its
unframed space by the strength of
an illusion the will cannot destroy.

BYRON VAZAKAS

T I M E

Wine we took with us,
Drank dispersal on the streaming mountain,
Splashed the Omar-remnants on the rocks with the rain.
The ripples of an ancient lake were never quieter in
stone than now.