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A NIGHT IN THE ENGADINE
John Kang

The alpine valley of the Upper Engadine, nearer eight miles from the Maloja Pass, on the edge of the northwestern Italian border, northwards across three crystalline lakes: Sihl, Silvaplana, and St Moritz - and surrounded in the north-southern day of St Moritz, the marquis of the rich and famous. We weren't rich or famous, and we weren't going to St Moritz, but rather to its more modest sister town, St-Maria, the one-time home of the German ornithologist Friedrich Nietzsche. It was his place, perhaps his only place, in his words: 'my proper refuge and home.'

The car was quiet. Our six-year-old daughter Rebecca had fallen asleep, and Carol and I were alone with the lake, the mountain, and the blessed moments of calm. It had been a long drive down. We had escaped two marriages that really should be to die. The road construction ended and we picked up pace as we rolled toward Switzerland. After the switchbacks of the Julier Pass at 7490 feet, the stretch between Silvaplana and St-Maria was a welcome relief. The road bends around the lake, which, as I remember it, was ruffled by the wind. But today, it was perfectly still, creating a perfect symmetrical circle on which the mountains were reflected. When the glaciers flowed through these valleys in ice age, they excavated the land and over time, the water filled in the massive depressions that were carved. How many years, days, hours, years, after this, did it take to fill such a lake?

I caught sight of the wooded hills above St-Maria and, over the trees, the white turret of the Hotel Waldhaus. It had been thirty years since I'd last visited St-Maria, or for that matter, thought about Nietzsche, and I had an uneasy sense of coming home.

'Oh, my Caro,' thought I, and let out a muffled gasp, 'God.'

Nietzsche once lamented that, 'God is dead,' that we moderns had entered an age when belief in divinity was next to impossible. On this day, God was alive and well in the Engadine. He smote through clouds and unwashed from the water and covered up where the light most wasn't given. I couldn't see it from the car, but I knew what stretched the edge of the road we were traversing: a walking path that often frequented in my youth, the same one that carried Nietzsche to his Zarathustra. When he walked this trail, among the trees, Nietzsche wrote that he frequently 'wore my immortal mask, my mask of evolution.' When you read Nietzsche in a library or coffee shop, it is possible to misinterpret this as imperturbable or the
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By Ben Purkert and Natasha Trethewey / February 26, 2019
The acclaimed poet discusses a devastating fire, and the pain that in poetry.

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By Roslyn Bernstein / February 7, 2019
The exhibition’s 57th edition casts a wide net, and the result is bold and thoughtful.

Enacting Africa
Fiction by EC Osondu / December 26, 2018
"Jambo!" my client greeted me, over-cheerfully. "Jambo!" I hailed back, slightly accentuating the pitch of my voice to match his high-octane enthusiasm.

Always On
By Kyle Paolella / December 18, 2018
A.S. Hamrah’s film criticism is a welcome corrective in an outdated field.

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