

ERIC D. GOODMAN

Fado

I.

It's been six months since Portugal,
and yet, we find ourselves listening still
to the soft, acoustic sounds
of traditional Portuguese music.

From the melancholy notes of fado
that vibrate inside us,
to the lightness of guitarra,
tickling the bones,

the playlist as addictive
as the egg custards and strong coffee
we consumed daily, like vitamins.

II.

Thrilled by Scottish bagpipers
on a misty gray day at Edinburgh Castle
as they serenaded us in plaid kilts,

the souvenir CD of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guard
does not carry the same excitement,
even coupled with a hand-delivered
Glenfiddich or two.

Instead, the recorded bagpipes
playing *Amazing Grace*
bring to mind a memorial procession
marching along the cobblestoned Royal Mile,
or a police funeral in Chicago.

III.

Boisterous oompah music
in the beer halls of Munich—
Augustiner and Hofbrauhaus—
matched the lively crowds of revelers
raising their steins

at long, communal tables of scuffed wood.

The music and beer,
smiling faces and clinking mugs
made the accordion, trumpets, tuba, trombones
all part of the delicious froth.

The same music piped in
from a home speaker works well
for a dinner of bratwurst and sauerkraut,
but does not contain the joy
of those faraway tables.

VI.

This afternoon, we bathe
in the *Waters of March*,
translating some Portuguese lyrics
allowing others to flow by on sound alone.

We dry ourselves beneath the warm breath of fado:
guitarra and viola,
a woman wailing,
craving what she once embraced tightly
but now misses so much that it aches.

Eric D. Goodman lives and writes in Maryland, where he's remained sheltered in place during the pandemic and beyond, spending a portion of his hermitism writing poetry. His first book of poetry, *Faraway Tables*, is coming in spring 2024 from Yorkshire Press. He's author of *Wrecks and Ruins* (Loyola University's Apprentice House Press, 2022) *The Color of Jadeite* (Apprentice House, 2020), *Setting the Family Free* (Apprentice House, 2019), *Womb: a novel in utero* (Merge Publishing, 2017) *Tracks: A Novel in Stories* (Atticus Books, 2011), and *Flightless Goose*, (Writers Lair Books, 2008). More than a hundred short stories, articles, travel stories, and poems have been published in literary journals, magazines, and periodicals. Learn more about Eric and his writing at www.EricDGoodman.com.