

Stand-Up Comedy

“Still do stand-up comedy?”
a friend asked me in all sincerity
and right then and there thought to myself, *No, but I will.*

Can't you see it?
Elongated room
crowded tables, no empty chairs
haphazard stage bereft of props
Seattle skyline backdrop
a stand-up mike, naked
bathed in penetrating light
not unlike an intense beam
thrust upon a suspect grilled
about a murder scene.

Then I'm introduced:
“Everybody, give it up for Dick Brugger!”
Then a rowdy round of applause,
Noise. I shuffle toward the stage,
beg for help in hoisting myself up on to it.
The emcee reaches out for me
as two poor souls from the audience,
drafted into service,
shove me upwards from behind.

There I am all-alone.
Squint my eyes inundated in sun-like beams of light.
Silence falls over the crowd.
I know they're asking: “*Will he make it?*”

With difficulty I hobble to the mike,
my arthritic hands clumsily dismantle it from it's haunches.
I peer out into deadening dark vastness.
Put the mike up to my lips:
“Will you please be quiet?” I ask a room that could not be more quiet.

“Let me tell you,” I say with deliberate voice,
“The other day a friend asked me,
'Dick, do you ever do stand-up comedy anymore?’
My answer: ‘Crappo, I'm just happy to stand up!’
Thank you and good night,”
and I wobble off the stage.

Dick Brugger
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