

HEATHER CADSBY

DO THOSE FLOWERS ON THE WALL LOOK DEAD TO YOU?

When the therapist asked what exactly I was afraid of, I told him boredom. “Yes,” he said, “lots of people have a fear of boredom. Very common. I can definitely help you get over that.” “No” I said, “I don’t want to get over it. I’m afraid I will lose it. There are so many forces that endanger it. I feel constantly threatened and now I see that you too are trying to pry it away from me. My husband has tried to trick me into playing chess with him. My son has placed outlines for continuing ed courses on my desk. My sister has suggested nature walks and my best friend invites me to concerts. These conspirators are determined to rob me of my boredom. I am at my wits end. I spend all this energy fending off cures when I could be enjoying boring times; guarding my secrets and incessant thoughts. I tell you, my supply is dwindling.” The therapist sat up. “Ah, so your problem is hoarding. I can easily set you up with a clutter specialist, who will have more expertise. My practice is pretty much limited to interpretation.”

THE CAUSE OF MY ROSACEA

We usually get together once a year to pick a fight—his messed up life, my spending habits, stupid haircuts and sometimes it escalates to re-enactments. This year we were going on about the Debussy/Saint-Saëns feud. I said Camille didn’t give me any credit for my innovations. He said Claude was way too disrespectful of his genius. And since we both were calling ourselves poets, we knew a thing or two about creating. When he said there was no one more avant than him and my theory was all rhyme and reason, I said, “I’m not enjoying this conversation.” And that was when he yelled, “This isn’t a conversation, you idiot, it’s a prose poem.

There are times when even the thought of a prose poem makes my face raging red.