

draft copy

By January

There are one-hundred and twenty-nine nightingales
perched above a dreamer's diagnosis of dead
on arrival just as his high society mother's artist
in residence is fussing over her prized painting
of a sun-dappled meadow with the collaged element
of a cross-legged angel positioned smack-dab
in the middle and floating above the thick layers
of gladly applied paint...

Just as his morbidly obese sister's stick-thin
doppelganger is changing colours and comparing
numerous examples of her inked and
linked on paper autographed signature; Just
as his one and only two-faced father
figure wearing nothing but a pair of Gucci
boxer shorts and waiting in the wings is brushing
away his Bryan Ferry forelock with a tricky wink
of an eye sleight of hand: "Let's go to the bank!" he says,
right after shaming me with one of his
mean-spirited criticisms and thinking he can get
my forgiveness, my forgetfulness, with a big lump
sum of cold hard cash. "Except," I say, cutting
him off in no uncertain terms, "I'll be gone –
by January."

Joe L,
Oct/2025