

# WORD PROBLEM

Tina Celona

When Twiggy Twigglesly showed up in the stairwell you lost no time in alerting me (I am not making this up). You had just made me a Campari-and-soda and I was trying to enjoy it. I had always enjoyed the vibrant red color of Campari though on one occasion it had been the only drink I had ever had to have replaced at a bar. Although my memory often fails me, I remember it was in New York City and that it occurred during the time when I was alone, after I had left my husband, who is no longer my husband anymore. But my memory is notoriously unreliable and so it is possible that my husband was with me and that he actually was the one who sent the drink back, but I am almost positive that this was not the case, that I was alone and waiting for my sister and her future husband to show up, but how could I have been at such a nice Italian restaurant alone? I could not have been alone, but since I was not with my husband, who was I with? On further reflection it seems that I was with my husband, and that it was the occasion on which he (and I) met my sister's future husband for the first time, or if not for the first time, then early in their relationship. We did not find a seat at that restaurant, where we were waiting (I making an effort to drink a Campari-and-soda, and my husband sending it back). It seems that at some point after returning the drink we crossed the street and ate vegetarian food at a restaurant across the street, where one of us (myself or my husband, if it were he and not someone else) ate a purée of fava beans. I remember this purée of fava beans distinctly as it was disappointing and accompanied by purées of other vegetables, and perhaps some french fries. My husband, who is actually my ex-husband, now that we are divorced, would remember this better than I, but since he no longer speaks to me it is unlikely that the question will ever be settled. It is even doubtful whether I will remember, when you and I have parted ways, how we laughed at Twiggy Twigglesly's efforts to disguise himself in the stairwell, or how I said I preferred brightly-colored insects to ones that looked like dead leaves. It was good, on such a night, to be alive. There was still much to see and do, and half a glass of Campari-and-soda to drink, if one did not want to appear gauche, or ungrateful.