

## The Horologist

Time must be kept. Two of his sons  
Have followed him into his prosperous  
Business: one a digital sorcerer, one master-  
Clockmaker who has served six years  
Of apprenticeship, and now in his own studio  
Creates time like a Bach composition,  
Perfecting its well-tempered intervals. Multiple  
Notes strike the hours. Among timepieces on display,  
A prized medieval horologe hangs in sunlight,  
Mounted jewels flashing on gold, its mechanics  
A cross midway between sundial and clock.  
Doctoring watches, the horologist raises his eyepiece  
To catch its emeralds sunning themselves at Mark  
Moon. His mainstem unwinds toward lunch;  
He lays aside a sick Rolex. He can tell,  
He says, even the illnesses of the wearers  
Of watches by changes in case metals. Cancer  
Is one of the easiest. His own ill is arrhythmia,  
And he remembers his noontime digitalis  
That doctors the biological clock, lessening  
The threat of a pacemaker implant. The dark  
Of some wakeful nights enlarges threats: the pacemaker,  
The loss of the sleeper beside him who conceived  
All the sons, the creep of death as one by one  
The small hours rise in robotic radiance  
On the square screen of the bedside clock:  
A two, a three, followed by the steady colon,  
And the quick flicker of minutes. Subliminally,  
He has already given over to tomorrow, to its  
Endless faces of familiar numbers. The feathering  
Of a five into a six, a seven, toward the recurring  
Nothingness of nought: he is up. Time must be kept.

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