

1996

The Sound of Silence Upon the Onyx Wall of Memories

Angela Bliss
Denison University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Bliss, Angela (1996) "The Sound of Silence Upon the Onyx Wall of Memories," *Exile*: Vol. 43 : No. 1 , Article 14.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile/vol43/iss1/14>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the English at Denison Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Exile by an authorized editor of Denison Digital Commons.

The Sound of Silence Upon the Onyx Wall of Memories

Taps of the soldiers' shoes shatter the porcelain silence before me.
Splintering like brittle bones into fractions, creating the names upon the onyx.
The letters scatter among themselves, fighting to form simple combinations
which I recognize.

At my feet lie envelopes addressed to *Dabby*, by someone who hasn't yet
mastered the art of *ds*

While the carefully etched Crayola portraits dapple the ground below me.
Now to my left kneels a young woman whose hand still glistens in the lemon-
stained day.

From her pocket she draws the invitation—already embossed in gold and silver.
It is speckled with raindrops, but the sky is void of all clouds.

Beside it she presents a photo where she stands adorned, yet lost in a sea of pure
white.

And just a few names down on my right, stands an older woman performing her
own ritual.

Her callused hands, now curled at the fingertips, wrap, vine-like around the
simplistic beads of a tattered rosary.

Her body is worn tired like the sagging lids of her weary eyes. Both having seen
better days

She pulls from her handbag a colorless photo preserved from years before,
Her youth illuminated by the dancing gleam in his eyes.

I look to the woman whose effortless expression mirrors mine

But the letters continue to scatter, fighting to form the names upon the onyx and

Taps of the soldiers' shoes shatter the porcelain silence before me.

—*Angela Rae Bliss*