

Steve Nickman

Exhibit 56309-G

(Deposition for the Defense)

Navplio, 1985

Exhibit 56309-G: Affidavit for the Defense

Navplio, Greece, 1985

Being properly sworn, I declare and assert
that on one August evening
in the town square the moon was full,
and the cafes with multicolored
neon signs gave light. It was neither
night nor day, a time behind time.
The pavement, polished marble squares
joined seamlessly without mortar.
From all sides a gentle gradient
led downward to the center, where rain
could flow through a lattice
to the sea. Nearby a stone cupola,
a statue within. On the dome
slept Athena's owl.

Teenagers shared ice cream, kisses,
an embrace, heedless of the goddess
and the bats' trajectories.
Skateboarders showed their feats of grace,
grinned to themselves and to each other
and to their elders strolling
their quadrilateral path around the plaza.
Exchanges of waves, encouraging shouts.
Crowning all was the cyclamen's song:
Kiklamino, pou vrekes to kokkino sou?
Where did you find that red of yours?
The secret happiness
of reclusive forest flowers
bloomed on the town's faces.
They danced the cyclamen.

Respected overseers,
should you contemplate an ending,
an altogether sweeping-clean

now or at some undetermined time,
I testify I saw all this
at dusk in the *plateia*
and could it speak
so would the moon.

Steve Nickman lives in Brookline, MA and takes part in Poemworks: The Workshop for Publishing Poets. He is a psychiatrist who works mainly with kids, teenagers and young adults. Nickman has a strong interest in the experiences and dilemmas of adoptees and their families, and is working on a book about therapy, *The Wound and the Spark*. His poetry is forthcoming or has recently appeared in *Apeiron*, *Mount Hope*, *New Plains Review*, *Cape Cod Poetry Review*, *Third Wednesday* and *Mid-American Review*.