

To Sleep with the Ineffable: Inviting My Sweet Informants

Emma Lou Thayne

*(Information: a non-accidental signal used as an input
to a computer or communication system)*

Cheek to pillow I slide my scalp up
away from my ear the way I lifted the mother of pearl stem on the
silver lid
that closed and opened to disappear under itself
and reveal the engraved soup tureen Father
brought to Mother from New Orleans in 1940
to grace our sideboard, filigree legs
daintily holding its weight on the great
handled tray also on legs where the scalloped silver ladle
lay too big to fit the hole provided in the round
immensely smooth coming together of cover
and oval holding the steaming potato soup
dotted with butter and sprinkled with cheese, parsley, and
paprika, the ultimate savor for Christmas Eve.

Is that where I learned it, the uncovering of what
held in the steam and aroma, tantalized the hunger,
promised satiation in its creamy lumpy richness?
What difference now that tantalized I raise my scalp
and open up the inverted feasting that the night provides
gentle ladlings from what the day and wakefulness obscure
to fill my waiting head with savor, nourishment
and answers brewed in councils I can join
only at a distance but intimate as sleep itself
that lavishes my dreams and wakings with all I need to know.