

Write Your Life

A micro memoir writing project

Recall a pleasure you gave up.

Away with Me

She said, “You can’t just haul off and start singing like that.” It was 1982. We were in the Inglenook tasting room. It was two o’clock in the afternoon, our third Napa winery. We were having a flight of reds when I thought of that Paolo Conte song, “Via con me.”

“Of course he can,” the wine guy said. “How did you like our wines?”

“Good,” Tizi said. “But you know what I really like in a wine? I like pucker.”

And I’m singing, *It’s wonderful, It’s wonderful. Good luck, my bebe ...*

“So, the lady likes them dry.” He reached under the counter and showed us a bottle. “You want pucker?” He poured us each a taste. “I’ll give you pucker.”

I’d been to Inglenook a few years before this. Still single. With a pack of rowdy guys. We were putting college behind us. We were getting careers and learning wine. Years later, two decades married, I would take people on after-dinner wine crawls around Florence. We tasted the Chiantis, the Brunello, the Vino Nobile. Some of us soaked it up. There were nights I got back in the hotel, before going to bed I stuck out my tongue, examined it in the bathroom mirror, and thought, Grape.

The next morning my revelers said, “All that wine we drank last night. And no hangover.”

“Love the Italian wines,” one would say.

Another one, “No sulfites.”

All good memories.

Also good: the forgetting.

When I paused drinking a while ago I thought, “What will I do for Saturday lunch? Or on a night out?” It was a long pause. Long enough to forget about it. Now some days at lunch or on a night out, I remember the pause. Not a drop to drink. Not yet. I can do this as long as I want.

But those reds. The song of them.

Wonderful.