

Espresso Machine, A Whiteboard and John Kerry's Diplomacy

By Nancy Mann

Cups, cups and cups of coffee,
Special food needs recorded
String cheese and Twizzlers were offered
Set out were crystal bowls of toffee...

Iranian and Americans in the same hotel;
Parties that hadn't spoken for thirty-five years
Opening up instructions from their presidents
The world watched, with significant fears...

Both parties surrounded by good people, the Swiss
An outcome would be reduced to writing;
The atmosphere for 19 days would not be bliss...

Kerry's counterpart, Mr. Zarif
(Had to promote his regime)
Said: "Iranians are sincere about reduction of arms"... as if!

Three times Kerry's luggage was placed on a plane to depart
Lesser aides intervened
Talks resumed – some had a change of heart...

The world waited.
Wendy Sherman, Undersecretary smiled
And smiled;
All breaths were abated.
Sticking point were the centrifuges;
While the Swiss, outside cavorted –
Slid down Alpine meadow trails
On bright painted sleds and on luges.

Opened and quickly used were hundreds of espresso pods
On an on – nine-hour sessions
The negotiators did plod...

On a small white board American secret nuclear formulas were written
By a careless scientist-giving U.S. calculations centrifugenous.
The reading of, by the Iranians so very dangerous!
Mistakenly, they were written un-erasably, on it
With black ink marks
John Kerry said: "Hark!"
"Dismantle the board! I will it pack;
Carry it out of the room – home, under my suit, even strapped on my back!"

Message boards were used by higher-up Iranians;
Click, take photo and send...to the Middle East
A “fake perusal”...
To divert the “hearts of the beasts,” and let diplomats talk;
And to avoid Teheran’s hard-liner’s knee-jerk refusals
(Diplomacy is such – it’s arguing, breaking to take some long walks).

But these were secret formulas!
It was a good thing Kerry noticed
Glancing up over trays
Of stale, triangular toast...
Amazing! He was clear-headed, had no mind-haze...
He covered part of the whiteboard up
With an overturned oversized china coffee cup
Kerry’s alertness, sharpness
Was due to the coffee’s caffeine...
Concluded were the successful talks – and
Wired, but tired, jittery red-eyed
Diplomats departed the scene!