

SUSAN GEROFSKY

Diagonal eyes enter leaving

My eyes scan cross-cutting fragments of diagonals;
The codes seem clearly to be error-correcting.
What images fly cornerwise across my vision?
Did birds or bats sneak subtly through the screen?
Are there ghosts lurking in dimly-lit edges of this room?
We mortals intuit, through tears, the persistence of dreams.

My codes fly subtly, edges of dreams;
The images sneak in, dimly-lit, the persistence of diagonals.
What birds or bats, lurking through tears, fragments of error-correcting,
Did ghosts intuit cross-cutting to be my vision?
Are there mortals scan clearly across the screen?
We eyes seem cornerwise through this room.

My images lurking, cross-cutting, across this room;
The birds or bats intuit clearly through dreams.
What ghosts scan cornerwise edges of diagonals?
Did mortals seem, subtly, the persistence of error-correcting?
Are there eyes fly in dimly-lit fragments of my vision?
We codes sneak through tears to be the screen.

My birds or bats scan, subtly, fragments of the screen;
The ghosts seem in dimly-lit to be this room.
What mortals fly through tears across dreams?
Did eyes sneak cross-cutting through diagonals?
Are there codes lurking clearly, edges of error-correcting?
We images intuit cornerwise the persistence of my vision.

My ghosts fly, cross-cutting edges of my vision;
The mortals sneak, clearly the persistence of the screen.
What eyes lurking cornerwise, fragments of this room,
Did codes intuit subtly to be dreams?
Are there images scan in dimly-lit across diagonals?
We birds or bats seem, through tears, through error-correcting.

My mortals lurking subtly across error-correcting;
The eyes intuit in dimly-lit through my vision.
What codes scan, through tears, edges of the screen?
Did images seem cross-cutting the persistence of this room?
Are there birds or bats fly, clearly fragments of dreams?
We ghosts sneak cornerwise to be diagonals.

About the structure of *Diagonal eyes enter leaving*

The poem's construction is based on a regular periodic, permutational interleaving pattern used to correct burst errors in error-correcting codes. Interleaving rearranges the bits of information before transmitting a message, and then puts them back in the original order after the message is received. The aim is to turn burst errors that affect a large data cluster into smaller, randomly placed errors that are easier to correct through other error-correcting techniques.

I've chosen a diagonal interleaving pattern as the structure of this poem.

The first stanza of the poem is displayed in table form as:

My	eyes	scan	cross-cutting	fragments of	diagonals
The	codes	seem	clearly	to be	error-correcting
What	images	fly	cornerwise	across	my vision
Did	birds or bats	sneak	subtly	through	the screen
Are there	ghosts	lurking	in dimly-lit	edges of	this room
We	mortals	intuit	through tears	the persistence of	dreams

The second stanza is obtained reading this table "on the diagonal." That is, the first line of the second stanza is the diagonal of the first stanza, and so on. The result is given in the table below.

My	codes	fly	subtly	edges of	dreams
The	images	sneak	in dimly-lit	the persistence of	diagonals
What	birds or bats	lurking	through tears	fragments of	error-correcting
Did	ghosts	intuit	cross-cutting	to be	my vision
Are there	mortals	scan	clearly	across	the screen
We	eyes	seem	cornerwise	through	this room

The third stanza is obtained from the second by the same process of "diagonalization". The process is continued for as long as each new stanza is different from all the stanzas that came before it. Note that the "diagonalization" of stanza 6 yield stanza 1.

More information and examples of poems constructed by this technique can be found in: ["Diagonal Interleaving Poetry: A New Generative Permutational Poetic Form Inspired By Error-Correcting Coding Theory"](#) by Susan Gerofsky, Bridges 2022 Proceedings,