

THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL

Volume 7 - Number 2 Winter 1956-57

CONTENTS

EDSEL FORD	Ten	1
ROBERT S. SWARD	Two Poems	2
LARRY RUBIN	The Loser	4
JAMES HINER	In Roaring Indignacity	5
JOHN FANDEL	Two Poems	7
SHEILA PRITCHARD	Thirty, and Falling	8
LACHLAN MacDONALD	Letter	10
GENE FRUMKIN	Joan at the Stake	12
GIL ORLOVITZ	The Rooster	14
SAN JUAN de la CRUZ	Llama de amor viva	20
HENRI GUÉRIN	Trois poèmes	22
NELLY SACHS	Landschaft aus Schreien	26
S. P. ZITNER	A Found Log	30
JOHN HOLMES	Two Poems	31
LAWRENCE LIPTON	How Jazz Was Born	35
KEN EISLER	Two Poems	36
K. K. LENDON	Two Poems	37
K. P. A. TAYLOR	Winterset	39

THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL
Volume 7 - Number 2 Winter 1956-57

TEN

Desire was a GI walking alone
On Hamburg-Strasse. Marie was ten
Big sister Giesela had been known
By twenty soldiers, and she was only
Four years older; and again
One is lonelier at ten.

He was American and seemed lost
Within the wide hope of her eye.
He would be glad she did not cost
Eighty Marks like other Frauleins.
After he had sauntered by,
She followed with an anxious eye.

Then drawing close, she said aloud,
"Who is it you are looking for?"
His quick smile made her very proud
Until he murmured "Where's your sister?" . . .
And she thought back upon the war
She had not known, but waited for,
When every soldier kissed her.

Edsel Ford

2

THE LADDER WIRE

The top floor was six
feet high, a box
and the bottom, five.

Electric current ran all
every inch, it could
through the walls and floor.

The current on the top
soothed, off
and she kneeled there

Waiting to be tipped
and herself
to fall, the floor down

To the electric and the five,
burning, shocks: A wire
ladder ran from the lower

To the floor again above,
and she would climb
up, over of the current.

Then the top standing
under her feet
would tilt her down,

And unable of the current
she would climb, setting
more to be fallen:

The ladder wire tore her
with lines, blood
the necessity, her climb.

Robert S. Sward

THE PICNIC PARTY

. . . what sort of bread moldy nerve
was the doughy crumb-sized spider?
a bunch of neural weaving web-gut,
gossamer head with ruddy grey legs
arms, and browner than white body,
not dappled, but rotten colored
like some dry discarded bite
of an old peanut butter sandwich—
. . . here's the story:

I'm sitting at the picnic table,
reading and eating, dripping a peach
when across a napkin comes small,
a grub ant queen, complete with wings.
She poises at the edge of the juice,
and I snap down my fingernail
and push her between the table-
boards, into a spider web.

She isn't quite dead, and kicks
and tries to fly up a fuss,
when the dirty peanut butter spider
swings into her with six or seven legs;
the old queen flutters and courtiers around,
nearly unleaven, a formic, saltine virgin,
but she's webbed, the spider's at her,
has her and drags her good into a corner,
and what knows what's in his head?
The queen's wings are off, worm-wind,
maybe, now, and the spider's on top of her
with all his arms and legs all around;
the web's a wreck of itself, and its threads,

4

and there's nothing gossamer about it.

Soon the queen is gone, barely there,
all spread and leavened-back,
the spider underneath, half hidden,
cleaner, again new, spinning like a moon
neural out of mold, . . . ant-belly, wings,
formic out of flight.

Robert S. Sward

THE LOSER

Playing Monopoly on the porte-cochere,
The dice rattling like a run-down clock,
With torpid terror I realized my token was melting,
That slow rain was falling on the underside
Of time: rust on the chain-guard of my
Bicycle, bearings rotting in my skate wheels,
Tangled cat gut in my tennis racket.
Nearing bankruptcy, I mortgaged all
I could: flimsy railroads, paper lots—
Mean investments valueless in rain.
My sports equipment by now was junk. No player
Would even make an offer.

We hardly noticed the sedan drive up beneath
The roof, scattering the game. My token
Was crushed under the left front wheel,
Unmelted. The banker shrieked under the axle,
So nobody knew who won. Gathering my broken
Playthings, I drifted pale into the rain.

Larry Rubin

IN ROARTIOUS INDIGNACITY

**Commemorating lines to a
vegetarian, anarchist, &
Irishman**

O

Most pee pole certainly
But not Mac Who
Came out in's 20th year,
Tosub ur(b)inate?
Not on your wife! Tho
Right by that wight they
Stopped on the way cal-
Esthenating and cal-
umniating the Blight
Born high or lowdown:
DOWN THE CITY! Willie! Ned!
Downdown the wittynittycitty
And be Gad! For-
En(sic)ally you mustyou
Mustyou MUST greetha
Hard big fast held rocks and spit
Out of pump a nickle bread.

No

Fish, no bonesmeat no
Red flesch fishy need-
Less-to-say meatain't
Tainted good. Sohesa
Vegitarinating on
The rubric of a cubic
Cucumbersome or pickle
But no meat for

6

Sickey would b.
Or else, 'rinding 'is tatters thers
Grass green bees eggs
Roots of cuneiform um-
Brageousness (sup)plied
With ketchup sauce and
Turnip greens or
Dandelion pimples, first
And then fried Joshuas
Or Conscientiousnesscity.

So

There's a rub a drake masseur
Down upon the lean dearth moor,
In might, in pur(PAL!)
Clothing 'rayed, rain down
The brackish carrotstalk!
Awalk among the finest facts
Of facing Nature's Herbs.

O Herb!

O Rubel!

Come down oh mighty down
Down come the mighty land:

O say freed of fricasseed, the

Stangled sparrycoast to lee:

Only LEAF, or leave it!

NOT, sees he

IN ROARTIOUS INDIGNACITY!

James Hiner

TWO VOICES NORTH OF COGGESHALL POINT

Look. A barge in the bay.
 Standing so still, it is
 The voyage of its own reflection,
 Or the deck of the sea,
 The summerhouse of a wave.

It's a dredge.

A dredge? But see
 Troy on its sea-side:
 Four ladders, squared, lean to a perch,
 A wooden eiffel, trellis
 For the rambler
 Gull when he walks out of the sky
 For a sort of rest.

A crane. It's a crane.

Oh, It is
 Hauling in the might
 Of the sea, though . . .
 See, the tide falls
 As it winds. Or
 It reels in some archaic whale
 From his loss of breath . . . no,
 It is rolling up the bottom of the sea.

**It is dragging in nets, old nets,
 Goose, silly, child . . . dear . . .
 But, quick, lend me your eyes.**

John Fandel

8

DIRECTIVE

However far a journey leads you south,
You are still north, you are still very north.

This is the consequence of every worth:
You will think **water** at the root of drouth.

Suppose you reach the pole, the Southern Pole:
N is the only direction you can go.

How can a man be south in ice and snow?
Even that south says north is still his goal.

Ever as you go south, the north will be.
Yes, I admit, this is not relative.

About the snow and ice, yes, I agree,
My meaning is less wry than illative.

And, yes, of course, the world is almost round:
North is north; south is south. I speak

An older compass. None of us has found
North stops when we are south. The flesh is weak.

It is the cause, it is the cause. Go north,
Young man, go north. Go north. The north is South.

John Fandel

THIRTY, AND FALLING

When I read the mariner's glass, thirty, and falling,
licked my fingers across the wind,
pictured the heavens against the boards, all
signs and signatures pointed to sin.

This was unusual. So defined
 and absolute, this threat of hail and thunder,
 that daffodil and man had better find
 a sheltering door down under.
 I ached exclusively for this. A fetish yesterday
 is no recourse: it pinks the west,
 but opposite, this storm, breaking
 shuffles birds from their wings.

It will handle us. I don't exactly know how you tell
 dynamite from thunder — its smell?
 But we built us a snowman who roused to a naked bear;
 Indians whispered his ferocity, his white patched head,
 and read his lumbering feet on black twigs everywhere.
 (And for all his coat is warm, his flesh is firm—
 a private good — he plays about the flood,
 rising, galivanting, a potent harm
 within his raised estate, his radiant hide.)
 This solitary mob and marvel robs the town,
 breaks children into sticks to pick his teeth,
 the scorch of his embrace can wither stone.

When we surveyed the likelihood of his frenzy,
 the enormous spread of his paws,
 the path of his possible raid, we said,
 This is imagination, and denounced the storm instead.
 Now, trap him! Grapple for him, bait
 his honey tongue. By strength of definition
 Everyone can shoot straight
 at the snowbear, right between the eyes!
 And if he lies dead, eyes done, sleet stung,
 where shall we bury him, what sea
 deep enough to cover over; how dare
 we carry him there, his heavy arms far flung?

Sheila Pritchard

10

LETTER

I will come home
To drink you deep
To rub myself into another world.
Put on the toe-ring with the bell
No other garment
And we will make music.
Melting with laughter
Bite me and tickle me and sigh
And I will hold, and you will cry
And we will tell each thousand times before:
Halibut schooner passed love on the shore
Or the first green appled sweater
Or the petals of your robe that fell,
We have a thousand times to tell
And each one better.

We have cried sadness
And we have cried glad
In anger I raped you once
Something good came of it
I don't know the name of it;
I nearly went mad.

Once in the columbine
Twice in the sleeping bag
Again on Mount Roberts:
Luxury of the moss

The whistling marmots
And the blessing sky.

We ate canned chicken and lettuce in bed
Nor left the room to eat.

Unpacking in hotels came last;
Ten thousand kisses at the St. Francis
Covered every nerve end.

We put glasses together
Bottles, coffee cups
Things we touched had to kiss.

Telephones were your breasts
I dialed and dialed.

We have bred angels
Art and starlight
Oceans
And mornings.

How I will carry you
Turn you
And love you
Counting the thousand times gone by
Hold you and harbor you
I'll warm you and wet you
And get you
Again and again;
And when you have taken me
Pulling me, shaking me
Rooting my heart and burning my mind
Wide open your mouth and your nose and your ears
Taste me your lips and

12

Brush me your tears
We'll weld every passageway
Sealing our love in.

Your eyes will undo me
And loose me
And spill me
And nothing will kill me or chill me again
We'll love to our
Bursting, and fall asleep
Thirsting
But never to end.

Milk you have fires me
Hair you have dresses me
When your cheek presses me
Heating my loins
Then waking, I'll take you
To cup, dear
Before we get up, dear
I'll drink you again.

Lachlan MacDonald

JOAN AT THE STAKE

Flames converge from all angles
in a yellow concordat
of smoke and darting spangles
covering stake and knot.

At the girl's first blackened flesh
the crowd murmurs in marvel
of her screaming soul in thrash
with her body's flaming devil.

Her milky robe is gone,
her marble thighs are burning,
angels and demons are one
in her agony of yearning

for the icy cross of Styx.

The crowd applauds her emotion;
the men who gathered the twigs
are pleased the consummation

is bright and quick, proving
the faggots they found were good.
Ashes of the girl are moving,
moths of gold from the wood.

Her fiery soul is no more.

It rose, flaring, up the night,
hovered and burst its war,
broken to pebbles of light

that fell hissing to the pitch
of death. The ending tragic:
not of saint, fool or witch,
but girl whose world was magic.

Gene Frumkin

14

THE ROOSTER

the rooster crows in my belly
an old hangout for the billiard cues of the morning
and table-hopping hail hail the ganglias all here
after sunset like a mouthwash last yesterlight
and the white tails of the gorillas on television
and that liberal politician stumping for twilight supremacy
down by that old

 shill
 stream

As I buttonholed the Ancient Auctioneer
how goes America going
 going

after the thunderbird pooped out over the canyon
when he clovered her cleavage
and she pleaded like an electric organ in the rain
the moon greased out of the ten commandments a make-
 up too late
what about the negative feedback of death
what about magnetism striking as a poisonous snake
or a hoop of jazzedup wire
snarling up communications over the Morse Pole
after the statesmen belched ionized yeast
and the physics convention approved the musical selection

Quartet
 For
 Four
 Mesons

in an expanding economy they do not matter
 the rooster will take us on a guided missile tour
 we are knellbent for automation
 the minister prays Our Lord Who Art In Heaven judge us
 not by our actions
 but fractions
 the skullskinner intones judge us not by our transgressions
 but analytic sessions
 the physicist says christ anybody can have a halo wheres
 the hesitance
 when we can boast electronic resonance
 you think anybodyll look for the pinprick in an expanding
 economy
 look easy and you will see
 a cad and a ford in every nebulae
 that no cometail you lost
 but gods custombuilt Buicks exhaust
 Americas producing for the Infinite
 Holy Ghost Mongerers for the Universe
 Export or Die
 theres a report we got a parimutuel for the flying angels
 constipation
 will be solved by
 automation
 Miss Wall Street does a dance of the seven tickertapes
 mathematicians enter the bullring to lock equations
 in the circus the economists show off their Trained Graphs

16

the specialists hide from the specialists
the whores organize their first Vertical Union
to which madames
 pimps and
 cops must belong
waddya mean youre contemptuous of the Middle Class
theyre the
 National
 Compromise
 going
 going

(its like some sort of abdominal bell)
the historians yang and yin
says its not too late to get out
and not too late to get in
hole hole the gongs all here
like some sort of abdominal bell
shes a Supermarket Baby with all the skimmings
mate doth look for automate
male finds femalleable
we dont die we reincarnate
this goes for everybody but the lower animal orders
those down-at-the-heel aristocrats who simply wont take
 in boarders

its already noon and I'm still expanding
I'm a Paul Bunyan Giveaway
schizophrenia for lonely dolts
manic nuts for shy bolts
paranoia for those who say nobody has followed them
telescopes by god for those who say we've hollowed them
hail to the architects whove eliminated the five-oclock
 shadow
we function beardless from the cradle to the nave

free sexual irrigation for the ascetic
 and thorns to bower the apoplectic
 the cardiacs will look like roses
 in this Promised Land without a Moses

hail to the farmers and their cows
 in swimmingpools of milk and honey
 hail to parity granaries of money
 the worker with his fake-home pay
 and the sociological gangster parentally rejected
 steals his fathers in property quite protected

alls fair in an expanding economy

alls fair in love and boredom
 the heavyweight champ
 is still damp

 behind his fears

the opera star endorses beers
 the homerun king belts one into the stratosfears
 rich as a churchmouse the saying goes
 the deacon leaves cheese between the foes
 the cathedral is built in stunted gothic
 this is america

 their very own

I'm going to the bank to get a loan
 get a loan

 little dogie

 get a loan

 going

 going

get a loan to

 integrate the negro in the south
 with white hoof-&-mouth
 a new perfume

18

for the bladderroom
pouting purses
for wetnurses
democratic steel

for teething kings
david-slings

for the delinquent
juvenile

and giant breweries
spiking castoroil with luminal
waddya mean whats the international policy
we got an expanding economy

we're counting cosmic rays in the bank
crow

rooster

crow

we got two gushers for every yank
crow

rooster

crow

we got cocacola in labrador
thats what you call getting your mouth in the door
crow

rooster

crow

we'll have skyscrapers in the ionosfear
every suicide'll live a charged particle here
crow

rooster

crow

we're putting extra-sensory-perception on the production-
line

get rid of that goose
our economys on the loose

we'll advertise a hermit for snob-appeal
 we'll get every hunchbacked shoulder behind the com-
 monweal

crow

rooster

crow

pile all your energies into the new Golden Calf

THE ELECTRONOLAUGH

THE COMPUTER

WITH THE SMILING TOMORROW

all the great comics willed their bodies to it

the graveyard with the future in it

WHEN IT LAUGHS IT DISPLAYS URANIUM-FILLED

TOMBSTONES

the bones

of contemporary saints

CROW

ROOSTER

CROW

going

going

Forest Lawn?

NO!

ELECTRONOLAUGH!

Gil Orlovitz

20

LLAMA DE AMOR VIVA

(Canciones del alma en la íntima comunicación de unión de amor de Dios.)

¡Oh llama de amor viva,
Que tiernamente hieres
De mi alma en el más profundo centro!
Pues ya no eres esquiva,
Acaba ya si quieres,
Rompe la tela deste dulce encuentro.

¡Oh cauterio suave!
¡Oh regalada llaga!
¡Oh mano blanda! ¡Oh toque delicado,
Que a vida eterna sabe,
Y toda deuda paga!
Matando, muerte en vida la has trocado.

¡Oh lámparas de fuego,
En cuyos resplandores
Las profundas cavernas del sentido,
Que estaba obscuro y ciego,
Con extraños primores
Calor y luz dan junto a su querido!

¡Cuán manso y amoroso
Recuerdas en mi seno,
Donde secretamente solo moras:
Y en tu aspirar sabroso
De bien y gloria lleno
Cuán delicadamente me enamoras!

San Juan de la Cruz

THE LIVING FLAME OF LOVE

(Songs of the soul in the intimate communication of the union of love of God.)

Oh, living flame of love,
That tenderly wounds
My soul in its uttermost depths!
Since you are no longer scornful
Finish all if you desire.
Tear away the cloth for this sweet encounter!

Oh, sweet burning!
Oh, delicious wound!
Oh, gentle hand! Oh, delicious touch,
That knows eternal life
And repays all debts!
Killing, my death into life you have transformed.

Oh, lamps of fire
In whose brightness
The deepest caverns of the sense,
Which had been dark and blind,
Now glow with a strange beauty
And have given warmth and light to the beloved!

What tenderness and loving
You recall within my breast,
Where you dwell secretly alone!
And in your sweet breath
Full of goodness and glory
How delicately you have made me fall in love!

St. John of the Cross
translated by A. M. Ortiz

22

LA NUIT DE MAI

Au fond du lit, glacée
La lune s'est glissée
Voyez les draps
Comme ils sont blancs de peur

Trois étoiles poursuivies
Par la misère d'un chien bâtard
Ont trouvé le refuge
Près de la coiffeuse

J'entends le hibou
Sur le pommier doux
Il cueille des branches de gui
Pour jeter aux comètes

Et ma chemise de nuit
Avec un nuage se promène
Il faut leur pardonner
C'est la nuit de mai

Henri Guérin

DIS-MOI GIRAFE

Dis-moi girafe
Toi qui vis avec les étoiles
Quel est le goût de leur silence

Grillon mon grand ami
Le bruissement des sables
Est le plus fin silence
Qu'on puisse de là-haut désirer

A NIGHT IN MAY

Into the bottom of the bed, frozen,
the moon has slipped.
Look at the sheets.
How white with fear they are!

Three stars, hunted
by the misfortune of a bastard dog,
Have found a refuge
Near the dressing table.

I hear the owl in the
soft apple tree.
It gathers mistletoe
to toss at comets.

And my nightgown
Wanders with a cloud.
Forgive them: for
it is a night in May.

Henri Guérin
translated by Jean Zlatiev

TELL ME GIRAFFE

Tell me, giraffe,
You who live with the stars,
What is the taste of their silence?

Cricket, my dear friend,
The whispering of sand
Is the purest silence
One could wish for from up there.

24

Dis-moi girafe
Et le plus beau silence
N'est-il pas la croix du Sud
Que j'aime tant

Oui grillon c'est la croix du Sud
Mais le plus pur silence
Il est dans l'attente de cette constellation
Là où ta voix se repose

Henri Guérin

AHI LIÈVRE

Ah! Lièvre
Il ne faut pas être triste
à cause d'une course perdue.

Non! Tortue
Ce n'est pas à cause de la course
Que je suis triste

Ah! Lièvre
Si c'est pour la laitue
Je te la donne

Non! Tortue
Ce n'est pas pour la laitue
que je suis triste

Alors lièvre
pourquoi es-tu si triste

Tell me, giraffe,
 The most beautiful silence,
 Isn't it the Southern Cross
 I like so much?

Yes, cricket, it is the Southern Cross.
 But the rarest silence
 Is that moment we await the constellation—
 That moment when your voice is still.

Henri Guérin
 translated by Jean Zlatiev

HEY, RABBIT

Hey, Rabbit,
 You mustn't be sad
 because you lost a race!

No, Tortoise,
 I'm not sad
 because of the race.

Well, Rabbit,
 If it's because of the lettuce,
 I'll give it to you.

No, Tortoise,
 And, I'm not sad
 because of the lettuce.

Well, then, Rabbit,
 Why are you sad?

26

Je suis triste parce que tu ne m'aimes pas
Si tu m'avais aimé tu m'aurais attendu
Nous aurions fait la route ensemble

Mais dit la tortue
Quand je marche moi
C'est comme si j'attendais

Henri Guérin

LANDSCHAFT AUS SCHREIEN

In der Nacht wo Sterben Genähtes zu trennen beginnt
reisst die Landschaft aus Schreien
den schwarzen Verband auf

Über Moria dem Klippenabsturz zu Gott
schwebt des Opfermessers Fahne
Abrahams Herz-Sohn-Schrei
am grossen Ohr der Bibel liegt er bewahrt.

O die Hieroglyphen aus Schreien
an die Tod-Eingangstür gezeichnet.

Wundkorallen aus zerbrochenen Kehlenflöten

O, O Hände mit Angst-Pflanzenfinger
eingegraben in wildbäumende Mähnen Opferblutes—

I'm sad because you don't like me.
 If you did like me, you would have waited for me.
 We would have gone our way together.

But, said the Tortoise,
 When I walk
 it's as if I am waiting.

Henri Guérin
 translated by Jean Zlatiev

LANDSCAPE OF SCREAMS

In the night when dying begins to part the stitches,
 the landscape of screams is tearing
 the black bandage open:

Over Moriah, the cliff-plunge to God,
 hovers the banner of the sacrifice-blade:
 Abraham's Heart-Son-Scream
 lying preserved next the Bible's huge ear.

O hieroglyphs of screams
 etched on the entrance-door of death.

Twisted corals of the broken throat-flutes

O, o hands with anxiety-fingers
 clutching the wildly rearing manes of victim-blood—

28

Schreie mit zerfetzten Kiefern der Fische verschlossen
Weheranke der kleinsten Kinder
und der schluckenden Atemschleppe der Greise
eingerissen in versengtes Azur mit brennenden Schweifen.

Zellen der Gefangenen, der Heiligen
mit Albtraummuster der Kehlen tapezierte
fiebernde Hölle in der Hundehütte des Wahnsinns
aus gefesselten Sprüngen—

Dies ist die Landschaft aus Schreien!
Himmelfahrt aus Schreien
empor aus des Leibes Knochengittern

Pfeile aus Schreien, erlöste
aus blutigen Köchern

Hiobs Vier-Winde-Schrei
und der Schrei verborgen im Olberg
wie ein von Ohnmacht übermanntes Insekt im Kristall

O Messer aus Abendrot in die Kehlen geworfen
wo die Schlafbäume blutleckend aus der Erde fahren
wo die Zeit wegfällt
an den Gerippen von Maidanek und Hirochima.

Ascheschrei aus blindgequältem Seherauge

O du blutendes Auge
in der zerfetzten Sonnenfinsternis
zum Gott-trocknen aufgehängt

im Weltall

Nelly Sachs

Screams locked in the torn jaws of fishes,
 Woe-tendrils of smallest children
 and the gulping breath-drag of old men
 torn into the scorched azure with searing comet-tail
 sweeps.

Cells of prisoners, of saints
 lined with the nightmare pattern of throats
 fevering hells in the doghouse of madness
 made of fettered plungings.

This, this is the landscape of screams!
 Heavenly ascension of screams
 up out of the body's bone-cages

arrows of screams, let fly
 from bleeding quivers

Job's four-winds-scream
 and the scream hid in the Mount of Olives
 Like (overcome by faintness) an insect in amber

O knives of the sunset thrown into the throats
 where sleep's trees, blood-licking, shoot from the earth
 where time falls away
 against the skeletons of Maidanek and Hiroshima.

Ash-cry from blindness-bound seer's eyes

o thou bleeding bleeding eye
 in the rag-torn sun's eclipse
 hung up for God to dry

in the All

Nelly Sachs
translated by Herman Salinger

A FOUND LOG

Perhaps a shoulder from the elms with blight
That were killed for safety, or from the live oak
That flourished like a cliff and blinded right
Turns with green, except at night, or from the hackberries
That seem to die of lightning or of heroic
Age in slow crashes. I didn't know. The bark

Was hale, but cryptic, and I am a fireplace
Woodsman. As well ask morticians about careers.
It had the unwieldiness and girth for grace
In logs, yet wasn't so ponderous as to be
Ceremonial and sat on. A log to drink
As it burned until so-longs at three.

I expected a succulent consummation and huge flames,
But it simmered off in ash and stolid cinders.
Neither chair legs, nor the wadded "New York Times,"
A Thunderer at last, could tinder
Even the bark to the leanest light. I fed it
My breath, my best curses, and best kindling,

And a waste basket full of paper. It only glowered.
But, in its way, did what it was supposed
To — gave back as much sun as it owed
In heat, but not specifically to me. It fused and fused
And never burst, but spent itself refusing
All night to let itself be used.

S. P. Zitner

INSTEAD OF ALBUMS

Very dear

dead people on porches posed, at meadow picnics
With hats. My chattering aunts. My cuff-linked father with
my smile.

Cousinly third cousins. My mother younger than my wife
is now.

Runaways! You did not outlast yourselves, and why?
Your unforgivable desertion makes me answerer
To my child on your laps, looking at himself in your faces.

Who's that? She was my grandmother Murdock. **That man
there?**

Will Upham, he painted the pictures we have. **Why?**
What fabulous an Uncle Harry from New York we
had,

Who'd run away from Charlestown young, and rich and
old, rumbled

In his moustache at our Thanksgivings. And my antic, my
clever-handed,

My young fat father, black hair parted in the middle,
How he and his clock-collecting cousin Artie, and Will
The painter, makers, three of a kind, spun my tin Christ-
mas

Spinning-top on a dinner-plate and broke both. **Why?**
What running

Up and down bare stairs, booted, a most cousinly
clatter.

Far over the Fourth of July family lawns, scattering
To the barberry hedges, down the terraces in among the
apple trees,

How we ran in white sailor suits, and sandals, and hair-
ribbons,

32

Away from all the aunts in white. Summer. Nineteen-
ten.

Who's that? That was my mother. **But she's old.**

No. **Is this you?** No, my father. **Oh, did you have a father,
too?**

Yes. Like you. You have the father I had, and the father
he had.

I cannot ask the dead what will become of us all.

Mortality aches in me. I wake up nights, Murdock-
Holmes-Upham ugly-tempered, a six-generation Scotch-
Irish melancholy.

Maybe this is my quarrel with you, that you left me hold-
ing hard

This inheritance of kind and mind, and no instruction.
This was my mother. Here. A narrow velvet black
ribbon

Round her neck. And here. Her hands in a brown fur muff
shyly.

This is in a canoe on the Charles, they were alone together
there.

He must have taken the picture, her face all in light.

Let's look at them all again. No. **And you tell me**

Who they are, again. No. Come back come back I am
lonely I am afraid.

I remember so much, and know little, not even the simple
dates

Or where you are buried or were married. Tell me
what to say.

You ran away into your separate deaths, leaving pic-
tures.

It is my trouble that I am fifty, minor chief of our tribe.
Instead

Of the Upham eye, the wide Holmes mouth again in my
son's face,

I want voices, warm walking bodies, hands big to
 reach to.
 I ask the faces in the album if this is what we came
 to,
 If this tightened their eyes, grouped on that porch, hold-
 ing me young
 As I hold this one, when the camera opened and shut on
 our generations.
 They do not answer. They have stopped running.
 They sit
 There forever, and I sit here, holding their warm
 youngest.

John Holmes

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS

Leaning ahead high at the knife-long bow of the motor-
 cruiser,
 North air on his face, he felt it all slow down, the
 prow lower
 Into the narrower, the civilized channel. He came
 down
 To the talk on the so very varnished wideness of the
 after-deck;
 To his hostesses; to the three-foot trays of one-inch
 hors d'oeuvres,
 Spread under the expensive sun. The boat steered
 itself.
 Everyone took two, seven, the men more. From her white
 leather pillow

34

Piled corner, a woman not the boat's owner laughed
and said,
He gives the cucumber the chive the olive the
anchovy

To everyone, so generous, and laughed and said again,
So generous.

She had been blonde. Laughing, she said, It is in-
credible,

Is it not? The sort of thing one can no longer avoid,

She said, as the cruiser slowed into shallow water. He
jumped overboard,

He waded ashore in not very deep water, mud, mud,
some gravel,

Then white sand and coarse grass, and got away
with it.

No one really noticed. Dodging left-handled doors, reach-
ing right,

Somehow he opened them all, went through, mayon-
naise and mud,

He was running in an oldtime movie, but he was
ashore.

The sidewalks lined up for him, he slowed down at the
street-corners.

He knew what he was heading for, people who
looked like him.

No one can hurt you if you look like people, he
said.

John Holmes

HOW JAZZ WAS BORN

Not on the velvet cushions
lace at the christening

Not with plumes and black horses
bells tolling muted brass

Rejoice at the death
and cry at the birth
 That's Scripture
 said the jazzman

He rambled O didn't he ramble
till the butcher cut him down
 Pitting life against death
 at two bucks for the gig

Three perfect notes
high in the trumpet
torn from the ringing brass
a scream torn from a great wrong

The arm that pounds the drum
is a hammer steel on steel
talking

 No second class aboa'd dis train
 No diff'rence in de fare

And the trombone talking God
out of the burning mountain
through the lips of his prophet
red-eyed unshaven
smelling of dung and heaven

Storyville Basin Street
Out of Jordan and Jim Crow
hymnal, brothel, tambo and bones
out of the talking drums
How deep are the roots?

36

Out of Leipzig and Florence
street musicians in rags
before Bach before Vivaldi

By New Orleans out of Memphis
St. Louis
 Davenport
 Chicago

And Leon Rappolo
with his beat-up clarinet
leaning against a telegraph pole
for hours through the night
blowing Weary Blues to the wires
strummed by the wind.

Lawrence Lipton

FOLK STORY

"If one must kill the hero, remember to preserve his reputation."—Afghan proverb.

I am that brave and much reviled monster
Who slew the insufferable Hero.

He came out to my den early one morning
And stood there, calling me all kinds of names;
Although I should have much preferred
Washing his mouth out with soap, I killed him.

Oh yes, I read what it said in all the papers.
Who did you think it was wrote the press releases?

Listen, a monster knows plenty, and maybe he thinks
About a couple of things that might not occur
To you, or even to that smart, snotnosed Hero.

Ken Eisler

WEREWOLF

Shuddering, touched by that rare and hazardous bane,
 The professor gradually turns prehensile.
 He growls, deep in his throat; his hot eyes strain from
 their sockets.
 Now he moves off into the night, smelling blood on the
 moon.

On the morning after (scholarly, rather pale),
 He wanders around with his hands in his pockets,
 Complaining of a dull headache.

Dull man,
 With too exclusive an interest in his work,
 It astonishes him that he should be insane;
 In fact, he looks forward with some interest to going
 berserk,

Aware that he is quite likely to metamorphose
 While putting on his pajamas, or blowing his nose.

Ken Eisler

I'M GOING TO KICK

"I'm going to kick the milkman's horse, Aunt!"
 But my modern aunt had nothing to say,
 Being aware that a milkman's horse
 Does not, as a rule, kick back.

"I'm going to be a hockey player, Mother!"
 And Mother nodded her confident nod,
 Secure in the knowledge that outdoor work
 Is good for the constitution.

38

"I'm going to run off with an Eskimo, Father!"
And Father, who takes a liberal view,
Shook hands and smiled at the chance to show
His unusual racial tolerance.

"I'm going to go straight to the Devil, God!"
But God was always so busy forgiving
He didn't have time to give a clap
Of salutary thunder.

So now I'm an athlete-atheist bum
Condemned to live with a frigid wife,
Condemned to wonder how in Hell
Or Heaven I lost my life.

K. K. Lendon

TO H. R.

So often I have not been impatient
While the old man's cane would search for the curb.
So often I have waited, never honking,
But sometimes the motor raced itself.
Today there was no need to practice patience;
Last night at the end of forty dark years
He saw the expected face.

When he was young, and flying was younger,
A biplane couldn't keep up with his daring.
They say he would never trust a dog
But trusted air with his high ambition
And lost his sight in the lust to look down.
Today there was no need to practice patience;
Today he was swifter than light.

K. K. Lendon

WINTERSET

When his car failed to climb the snow
hill, he backed carefully down,
turned about, to back again
to the top road, proud as his riders,

when turning he saw the following car
breast, too, the high road, shudder, spin,
fall slowly to a sliding side
under the edge of road,

—and shadows falling, wheeling
to a still row . . .

Running, he saw her body, the last of this line,
motionless, arms to side, face to empty side,
deployed in thin snow.

Bent over now his cowering body
her body, panic hovering,
the name shouted, despair shouted—

Stirring, she moved slowly all her limbs,
extending fending

K. P. A. Taylor