

*The Wormwood
Review*

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The Visit

for Robert Frost

*The little world of the garden bare,
Swept by the frost from wall to wall,
We carry our roots to the cellar's bin
When, look !, a brown thrush comes to call.*

*The short day runs on frozen feet,
Its shadows lengthen out ahead,
But today a gentleman in brown
Sings in our hedge, pecks at our bread.*

*All through the night we hear the surge
And ebb of wind against the panes,
Housed in his twigs and straw our guest
Startles us with his summer strains.*

*The morning climbs its shrunken arch,
The sun dial wakes, but the bird is gone
As if he had told us all he dared
Of life renewed by the grace of song.*

-- James Hearst

Cedar Falls, Iowa

The Tarnish

The afternoon failed of its promise and the sun
Hid in a thicket of clouds on its downward climb,
The bright day's petals tattered and fell apart
Lost as a tower clock's voice asleep at its chime.

I rocked on my heels, saw the sleet with rowdy hands
Rumple the tulip bed while a cold wind goaded
A child at play till she cried, I turned to stare
At a shallow hill where the topsoil had eroded.

The small mean faults of the day like blisters broken
Rubbed raw, were slow to heal, I felt time's wedge
Split need from the order of things, like a farm run
down
By shabby intentions, a plow with a rusty edge.

My pride reads omens in mischief, and my hand tosses
Entrails from stunted dreams in the air as portents,
I carry my doctor's degree on these occasions
And speak at length on the tarnish of small losses.

-- James Hearst

Wonder

Unmistakably
Life is a large dark puzzle,
In the small boys eyes.

-- Camille Yawin

Bowling Green, Ohio

Dark Justice

Some of us never make out. Some of us.
Some of us remain seed in darkness for
ever; insistently foetal; our needs
and our desires fenceposts against a world
valid as that to which we each react.
With ourselves centering universe; yeast
in surfeit; deaf and dumb growths; we perfect
hyperbole as when standing, closely,
in upon a mirror, our large return
is overstatement true to life as we
have told it. But, when we have stepped back from
the glass and, perhaps, a little to the
side, we soon see how much of what is not
us there is; and also how too much of
us has let little into view.

It is
as Webster says: light is the essential
condition of vision. Drawn down now in
the mirror's eye; object from subject turned;
all that self centeredness eclipsed inspires
review as that given to the home once
spring brilliantly arrives.

Let me stay so.
Let me in simple fee of light, remain
pebble-proportioned as, indeed, each is
outside the sunless womb. Out. Let me hold
out; hold until death -- devouring light --
in dark justice comes to make blind, entomb.

-- G. C. Oden

New York, New York

Love Poems: 1

I raise my hands like black wings and feather my hair:
There is nothing I can do to make Catherine Wheels
Or anything, or anyone else beside break you smiles,
A linger like a pearl between me and the sea
Waving, spinikers of sun, a wind
Suddenly up and clean for every coming hour -- not
At all for more than shadows in the moon's door.

The daisies in the window-jar bend to listen
To his guitar played in the dark, and someone else's
Head banged up and down for tunes to get you laughing
On and on, and running out of steam, to say,
'Oh that was wonderful,' and say 'yes!' with your look
Long afterward. But what a crazy time it is
To have you flicker up and down, snow on the surf.

Oh, but love is a great thing this way --
To know I cannot kiss you even a little
And have a fire spring in you and stay, high,
Oh high, melt down like a stick of gold, or give you
A hat with daisies on it, or bring you
A glass of water with a cherry in it,
Or pick you up and throw you out the window like a kite.

Where does love go moonward from here? No,
I think it beautiful to play the game,
To be looney in the window with a daisy in my mouth,
And look at you like seas, like grass in a wind,
And high blue breaking out a silken acrobat of gulls --
And then shrug my feathers, arch the failed clown,
And sit down in the window, waiting in your eyes!

--Mark McCloskey

Athens, Ohio

Love Poems: 2

*I have thought of our coming,
The wheeling of gold tendrils together
In a white place, star-circled,
The moon bleeding the pine's amber,
And the blue odor of brooks.*

*I have thought of our coming in dreams,
And the black light of the sea was there,
My hands passed over the pink shell,
And touched the sand's violet, smoke
That pushed the belly then, and legs
As I crouched down over the embers
Of the shell, in the dark breeze
Where magic is, and the sea moves,
Were moved closer to the sinew
Till it crushed gold, and I fell back,
My arms white branches extended out,
Exquisite pain by the rattling night-grass.*

*I have thought of our coming
And seen silences in the sea-clouds
Far away over the water,
And refracted in the prism of the lost,
The coiling down sun, me, shaped
Brokenly, still through the shell blown,
The pink-rimmed horn in the grove,
The bent-backward on the pool's rim for sheer
Joy of that pure echo, alight
From the whip of my hair in the dark,
In the sweet touch of the ripples,
News of our coming to the sea beyond this,
News of your coming and mine to the brook,
The odor of amber the wheel of the moon revealed.*

-- Mark McCloskey

Leonardo Flies Again

When space trackers in Texas first heard the sound of ultra-sonic breathing and radar heartbeats from the first ship in orbit, they asked: "Is it a lion? Is it a monkey? Is it a man?" But I recognized you.

Not as you died -- an exile in a far land -- or when you were "also a painter" in your youth in Florence, or when you were sketching the tortured bodies of horses and men for your lost "Horrors of War."

Rather as you are in your secret notebooks filled with sputnik visions, flying centuries ahead on that batlike wing you hoped to put into orbit yourself.

Forgive us, Leonardo, for having laughed at your stretched-out, batwing hands. At last you have arrived beyond the painting and the sculpture and the war machines and waterworks you sold to dukes and kings.

It is your breathing and your heartbeat we hear in the new space rider, spanning the centuries, leaving behind this grave-heavy planet to join the first man on earth who knows where we are really going.

Question

Off shore tonight
sea cancers weigh anchor
and fins slash
the womb of oyster days
to come.

In the sky
star clusters wheel
over antheaps of light years
some other radar system
is telemetering.

*Considering the unemployed
galactic systems
waithing to get to work
and start moving in on the free world,
should I tear up my rent book
and turn a few more sheets of paper
into poems?*

For Lillian On Our 37th Anniversary

*Replying to your toothache of the 9th inst., wd say
my manic-depressive switch is turned off and I can't
tell which side I am on -- like on a Wednesday when I'm
down and never know, it seems to me I sound like any
other people.*

*And you -- with only one good arm and leg -- have been
sentenced to ride this rocket around the light bend to
Vega! But why blame the engine? Maybe it's the tracks
that are crooked?*

*Otherwise, everything is O.K. The garbage is put out.
The plants have been watered. And the cat we haven't
got is fed.*

*Anyhow, even an expensive rocket plane got wrecked the
other day by a dozen irrelevant gulls its engine sucked
in. So if you did have too good arms and legs and an
unfractured cerebellum, the going would still be rough.
Compared to the whole particles who have to make their
trip without handrails, you have nothing to lose but
your balance -- and the Great Flying Wallendas themselves
couldn't keep their high-wire act on the road as long as
you have*

*on top of on top of on top of
The Man Without a Net.*

-- Walter Lowenfels

Mays Landing, New Jersey

Consolation

*He tends to his garden,
It is beautiful.*

*He tends to his wife,
She is ugly.*

*He tends to his garden,
It is beautiful.*

-- Aline Musyl Marks

Lincoln Park, New Jersey

Horses On Other Beaches

*You are forgotten in Samos.
You do not ride my heart's horses;
They roam the beaches freely,
Hungering for the bit.*

*Night breaks into the water,
Wasting its store of darkness,
And waves have touched the rocks,
Leaving a mark of their own.*

*Hear the muffled gallop
Of horses on other beaches;
You are forgotten in Samos,
Who found our sea too small.*

-- Norma McLain Stoop

Greenwich, Connecticut

Worm

*No matter what I thought,
warm at the core a worm,
thoughtless, kept eating up
the orb of form.*

*Something desired the sap
that siphoned through the stem
and pumped the apple plump.
It sucked my syllogism.*

*After worming in
-- it left a needled hole --
something small began
slyly to grow.*

*What sweet interior
-- rounded with red --
on which a creeping creature,
fattening, fed.*

*Still the form remained
perfect as before --
a thought that just contained
the worm or error.*

-- Harold Witt

Orinda, California

There's A Moving Of Lips When The Governor Reads

That people in high places so readily relinquish the pleasures
Of reading -- not necessarily diversified reading just reading --
In favor of pictorial presentations of complex matters requiring
Signatures or stamps or seals or official spit of some kind
No longer shocks. Overtensing is so much a feature of our
Licksplit lives that little really shocks. Hundreds thousands
Millions do the agony twist and we ACT with our little dance
Twist we would so delight in seeing the first lady do in the
Context of family and world tragiforms panel after panel. So
Now we watch the governor's lips in fascination with some of
Us saying THERE I saw his lips move he really read something
And others of us saying NO he is just nervous and that is why
His lips quiver. Meanwhile we take pictures some of them
Developed and printed in ten seconds and some in brilliant
Colors, and we also take Bromo Seltzer and Bufferin and
God in small doses, trying to be left without need. But we
Need. And some of us bleed when we watch the governor's lips
So hopefully. And our own lips dry and split beyond repair by
Chapsticks and kisses from virgins titillated by our hair and
Underarm deoderant and toothpaste and other marks of worth --
Our own lips seek again the simple milk now contaminated
Irretrievably it seems by those whose lips moved not only
Here not only here but elsewhere and not to read or suck or
Sing but to decide about us for us without us.

-- William Sayres

North Chatham, New York

Selenio P. Masters

Selenio P. Masters walked the night streets with an aggregate Of instrument players who thumped and tooted more or less softly While he bellowed MAN MATTERS. So he thought; so he said. Oh, Those bellows! Tremendous, they were; so easily he destroyed Sleep. MAN MATTERS MAN MATTERS and out of bed you go! Such a Voice! His shoes were almost destroyed by so much walking without Sleep. MAN MATTERS he bellowed. Oh, those bellows! Through Detroit, Wichita, El Paso, Santa Barbara, Topeka and especially New York City he walked with his aggregate, bellowing, sleepless. MAN MATTERS he bellowed, sending it crashing through the night Streets. Thump thump thump MAN MATTERS blow more or less softly In the night streets without sleep through Sandusky, Syracuse, Hamtramck, Austin, Las Vegas and especially New York City. Oh, Selenio P. Masters walked limping stumbling without sleep with Fewer instrument players than the year before. MAN MATTERS !! Oh, those bellows! He looked up at me through my window at night. MAN MATTERS! I opened my window and dropped him my doubt. Oh, Those bellows! Thump thump thump MAN MATTERS MAN MATTERS. I Closed my window, but his voice crashed through the night streets And through my window. Oh, those bellows! Tremendous, they were. Selenio P. Masters walked sleepless destroying sleep bellowing Through closed windows thump thump thump MAN MATTERS and I Groaned and shook in terror and rushed into the night streets Shouting EXCEPT ME! But my voice was lost in the bellows that Moved towards Scranton, Mobile, Montgomery, Erie and Eugene.

-- William Sayres

I

thats not your face
it was mine for awhile
give it back
you stole it

youll regret it
because you stole an already stolen face
I took it from somebody else
and when he demanded it back I laughed in his
and told him he had stolen the face I had taken from him

somebody will steal your stolen face from you

look at it this way
somebodys got to be the first one to give the face back
no I dont know how far its going to have to go back before it reaches
its rightful owner
for all I know he might not recognize it
and even if he did he might not want it if he had learned how to get

along without it

which is why it mightve been stolen in the first place
because the owner mightve wanted to learn how to get along without
a face

but hes got to be given the chance of seeing he could have it back
he wanted to

so he can really know he doesnt need it
youve got to give a faceless man the choice of regaining a face or
living without it for

because he might take his face back because he wouldnt want to
deprive you of your chance for facelessness

you see theres really only one face to go around
when its maker saw what he had done he realized his error and never
made a second face at all
and trying to right his error he made the rest of men a mass of thi
since he knew by this way each man would have the passing experienc
of a face

but somewhere the man whom the face fits perfectly
and although he might take it back if it were offered to him
he might turn around and hand his face to its maker
and this possible event is something we shouldnt take the chance of
missing

because then we should all have the chance of forgiving the maker
his error

but our very forgiveness might be revenge
and in his fury the maker might dash the face down and break it
into a thousand pieces
and you never know what form our vanity would take then
we might be condemned to searching for the pieces so as to be able to
fit the face together again
and nobody would be able to tell us from the other four-footed animals
thats why the man I stole the face from finally stopped asking for
it back
and it wont be long before I stop asking you
I wouldnt feel right if I became an animal again
its better to be a faceless human than an animal with a face
for facelessness is your perfect reflection of another humans
imperfect reflection

II

have you ever seen a man break a face across his knee like a slat
and then walk along his neighbors street swinging each half of the
broken face in either hand so itll dry faster

if you watch him youll see him finally go up to a beggar and say
listen youll make a lot more money if you hold half of this face
in one hand and half in the other
that way the passerby will feel twice as sorry for you
you can also tell them youre trying to raise money enough to mend a
broken face
notice Ive hollowed out the backs of these halves so theyll each hold
plenty of coins or bills
and the empty eyesocket is convenient for stable grasping
like a lot of people I know you have no face so this ought to come
in handy
but make sure you keep it in your hands for begging
it wont do you any good if you put it on your head
Id give it back to the man I stole it from but I obviously wouldnt
recognize him now

III

don't worry about your face
it's not yours anyhow

what about the baby's face you ask
well you say the baby looks like you or her or the grandparents or
whatever
or it looks like nobody you know at all

obviously the baby is a master thief
it goes around stealing all kinds of faces

I know I said there's really only one face
that's true

because that one face gets twisted this way and that
so what the baby really does is steal a face from somebody
and then when somebody else comes along and steals the baby's face
the baby manages to steal it again after it's been snatched
from several other heads

IV

the actor as you can probably already tell is a baby
the actor more than anybody else would like to make his stolen
face a success

something permanent

he guards his theft ceaselessly

he plays with his stolen face

he croons to it

he experiments making it black or yellow or white

he lectures it

he makes love to it

he makes hate to it

he tries to amuse it with games

all because if someone manages to steal it from him then the face
will remember where it had such a wonderful time and will
get rid of its new captor and make its way back to the actor

but face has no memory

V

all of us one time or another think were just face for awhile
just as we are now

I know theres a head behind me
but the head itself has no face
I have only face
the head behind is faces shadow

and then suddenly theres a longing for gods sake wont somebody come
along and steal face
so that its shadowhead will come into its own again in all its
featureless splendor

to be brave as the man who broke face across his knee into two halves
but not pieces
we dare not face the wrath of faces maker

VI

even the dead mans face is stolen

VII

stealing face is the only theft not punished by law

VIII

god you know is faceless

the maker of face mustve been jealous of god and decided to make
something you could hide behind by weeping on it and
laughing on it and cruelling on it and pitying on it and
hating on it and begging on it
you could put all these things out there on face and hide behind
and everybody never would know who you really were because they
would want to steal your face but the facemaker didnt know
about that till after he had made the error of face
perfectly for one man

the facemaker knew he had made an error because he instantly felt
that the man with face was hiding from the facemaker behind it
because in that instant facemaker knew he had been jealous of
himself
knew in fact he was god who had become jealous of himself because
he could no longer bear knowing everything so that he had to
make face on a man so that god wouldnt be able to see everythin
and that at least man could hide from
but god knew he had made an error by having one man appear not to
need god because the man needed expression
and god shrank in all dimensions before the expression of no need
for gods on the mans face
but god could not in his mercy after refusing to make another face
destroy the face he ha
made

because then the rest of men seeing the face wanted the hidden feel
the no need for god feeling
and god could not deprive them

gods mercy will cease only if we forgive him by the act of the man
whom face fits returning face to god
an event we want to see and dont want to see

so that man lives in the tension of having face and having no face
lives tense between the desire to forgive god and have face broken
into immumerable fragments so that in enormous vanity he will
become an animal altogether gods again in his search to fit all
the pieces of face together which he will never be able to do
and the desire to keep stealing face so that at intervals he can at
least show no need for god

IX

one man whom face does not fit will one day hold on to face and no
let it be stolen from him
and this will be his psalm

I am altogether hidden before the lord
I am courageous in knowing the lord cannot know me for I have by
the lords hand grown beyond the lord
I am more than the son and more than the father because I disown
featureless splendor

I am finally man because I will make face for each man like unto no
other
we will hide forever from the almighty
god will not know we have moved into him
and god shall be the face outside looking into our window
and he will wonder where we have gone

-- Gil Orlovitz

New York, New York

Lyric

for L. O.

Wake me, before you go,
with the hand of your heart
that the moment at my throat
be swallowed by mine eye

in the deepest pit of pulse
that, as I give back your hand,
I know your heart sleeps full
of me undemanding.

Love holds most, then, at the slip
of parting when, open-handed,
I cry out in your sleeping heart --
knowing I must wake you before
you come again to my sleep.

-- Gil Orlovitz

February 6, 1962

"Perhaps if you know something about me you will be able to view this poem in the proper perspective. I am a fifteen year old suburban teen-ager and this is my first attempt at magazine publication. The ideas expressed in this poem were developed when I was thirteen years old, but the actual writing of it did not occur until this summer. Since the age of thirteen I have written over forty poems that help to express the 'I' in 'I Am Searching.' However, the enclosed poem seems to be the only one of any value...."

I Am Searching

I am searching
For the truth
I am searching
To find out who and what I really am
To find the real religion and the real right and the real wrong
To find out why mankind always wants more of everything
To find the real beauty of life
To find the secret of nature and creation
To find God
To find the answer to eternal life
To find out if Darwin was really right
To find out why Little Orphan Annie doesn't have eyeballs
To find out why sometimes I'm oversexed and sometimes I'm frigid
To find out why I can't paint like Michaelangelo

I want to find out the answers to all my questions
Only there aren't any answers
And sometimes I can't even state the questions
But I am still searching
To discover love -- if it exists inside me at all
To discover all the knowledge in the world
I am searching for the day when suddenly
'Poof' and I understand everything and anything
For a boy who will think of me as a woman not as a friend
For a real friend
For complete happiness
For peace
It just seems that I will never find what I am searching for
I don't know if it really matters
Just searching seems to be of importance

I am searching

To find all my hidden talents laying under a rock somewhere

To find that Pond of Thoreau's

To find the "Iceman" and really dig what O'Neill is saying

I am searching for an understanding of mankind

A philosophy of life

A way of life

A true belief in a true religion

I am searching for an answer to Freud and Khrushchev

For a beautiful green field garnished in sun yellow

Daffodils where I can just sit down and look at the sky

And fall in love with the whole world and

Really dig everything and everyone with unselfish love -- real love

I am looking for the impossible

I am searching for Heaven and Hell

And my soul -- if I have one (I am also searching for the answer to that)

I am searching for the day when everyone will

Give up their pipe dreams and look at themselves naked

(I am searching for the end of the world!)

Most of all, I am searching for life

To live it -- to love it -- to understand it

I am searching for someone to take the love I have to give

And to love me in return

I am searching for the end of space -- there must be an end somewhere

I am searching for six million dead Jews in the ruins of Auschwitz

I am searching for our lost civilization

I am searching for a road map to Paradise

And for Alice's wonderland and the house on Pooh's corner

I am searching for an obscene word to be printed in the 'N.Y. Times'

I am searching for my lost childhood

I am searching for my teen-age years that never were

I am searching for an answer to what happens when I die

And what will be happening here when I'm gone

I am searching for an understanding of

Ginsbergs 'Howl' and Ferlinghetti's 'Her'

And for Kerouac's road where I can meet people who too are searching

And are screaming for help, help, help

I am searching for a place where no one will bother me

For Alexander Graham Bell so that I can kill him for inventing the telephone

*For the men who made the A-bomb and the
H-bomb and fallout*

*I am searching for Governor Rockefeller who is hiding in his
Fallout shelter somewhere wearing a "sane" button*

*For all the mistakes of mankind so that I may obliterate them
and give everyone eternal peace*

*But most of all I am searching not for others' but for my own
good*

I am searching for an identity

A soul

A self

I am searching for myself.

-- Marian Schwager

Teaneck, New Jersey

Hard Luck Story

*I reached to
strike a light
but a time-bomb
interferred and
no one since
has even so
much as mentioned
my name.*

-- Charles Shaw

New York, New York

Salted With A Special Salt

*Saltines are salted
With a special salt,
(Sugar lumps are wrapped in gold;
Little cakes and bonbons
Come in accordion-pleated cups,
Like the dance skirts in Saturday class)
Salted, wrapped, and maybe pleated
From father's banquets in mirrored rooms,
Long tables under waltz-light chandeliers,
Cloths of snow and golden chairs,
Waiters in red coats or green.*

*Saltines are salted
With a special salt
When they appear
On the dining-room table next morning,
From a father out into a night of banquets,
In a long room floating smoke in blue scarves,
Words shining with the silver.
He remembered,
Brought his banquet to morning me,
And what will be on the table today:
A party-wrapped sugar lump,
A pleated cup with a bonbon,
Or a cake with a candy flower?
Saltine is surest,
Saltine special salted.*

... Emilie Glen

New York, New York

The Balloon Burst By A Pin

A scientist says: What kind of pin was used? And what was the weight and diameter of the balloon?

A poet says: What I heard and saw was merely the nightmare of an invisible insect, an insect on the verge of a nervous breakdown.

A business man says: I haven't got time for such nonsense; let me out of this place!

A child of four years says: Ha! Ha! Wheeeee!

An old man of ninety says: I have seen this happen before; I enjoy it each time. Ha! Ha! How exciting!

In the meanwhile, a filthy, homeless Foxhound has been standing among these spectators, his hungry eyes roving from one person to another as they spoke and pointed at the balloon. Suddenly, after a heedful pause, the dog leaped to the strips of rubber on the sidewalk, sniffed them cautiously, wagged his tail curiously, and eyed once again the wonderstricken spectators, then trotted across the street to the next crowd of people.

-- Frederick Jones

Hope, Arkansas

Angels On The Brain

The Angel
that darting, graceful, infinite thing
who is half-child,
part butterfly,
ferocious dove
and likes to sing.

-- Matthew Hochberg

Brooklyn, New York

A Taste Of The Lady

Truly you have hot lips and a terrible tongue,
Bold to hold, to enfold, worth ten tons of gold.
Eyes too pornographic for pictures or print.
They match the speed of the tiger with their sudden, sexual ferocity.
They shatter more completely my tired old, false old, oaken reserve,
sister,
Than the lightning completely shatters an oak.
More graceful than the tiger springs, oh sister!
And ears to breathe into, easily wooed and won
With such electricity and to bite and chew and nibble,
Easily won by such machinery. A nose that delights to inhale
pleasure,
Have it distilled in with and return pleasure taken
As pleasure given. A neck for worship
Which also delights in the sacrifice of tooth and tongue.

Greeting

Death has no last name.
Nor face to find and mangle,
Or throat to poison and strangle.
Head to kick
And break with brick.
Or chest to shoot and knife,
No friend to betray him or wife.
So goodbye to books
And pipe
And custard
Hello O Death you bastard.

-- Matthew Hochberg

The Voyeur As A Dreamer

*I dreamed I climbed a tree
in a leafy green garden
and of course what I saw
through a nearby window was
a naked girl looking out into distance
across whose belly and thighs the soft
white curtains blew
wishing they were my trembling hands
wishing oh so badly they were my lips
whispering over her skin,
and I pitied the poor gauzy curtains
that wished they were my hands
and lips and of course
in my dream this girl became possible,
moving her hips slowly from side to side
in a beginning dance the music of which
blued her eyes and softly
awakening
they (her eyes, blue with
music) found me, tortured and erect,
hungry and hot and full,
and still swaying gently she opened
her lips from a small smile
into a round kiss and blew
over me a shower of white
blossoms.*

-- E. Hale Chatfield

New Brunswick, New Jersey

Winter Among The Indian Hills

*Point Lobos and the Coast of Sur
are now green flanked though Winter
in this country has laid its cover ...
And from my window gazing upon these bleak hills
which lift up naked in the Winter sun ...
without trees and only sage and rock, a nude dun ... to give them
beauty.
I am mindful of the Sur sea rocking bleakly upon its granite shore,
and I hear in the silence of this,
my forbidding country,
the pulse of an ocean's power extending to the sweep
of these hills, these ranges, these sage plateaus
where I, the watcher, weep ...
while winds and Winter assail the stoic and silent
Indian Hills.*

-- Wendell B. Anderson

Ranches of Taos, New Mexico

HOW WE TRAPPED THE WOLVES

*I was just playing
with the dog, baying
as a boy will,
when he turned tail
and let out a wail
and ran over the hill.*

*Then I on all fours
went to my chores,
and never got up.
My family sighed
and reckoned that I'd
turned to a pup.*

*But, child to some other
than my own mother
or my own sire,
I howled about lunar
disturbances sooner
than lack of fire*

*when I was left
cold and bereft
outside at night;
and, gnawing a bone
in time of alone,
considered my plight.*

*Then the dog came back
one night with a pack
of wolves, six or eight;
and I knew that my time
was long past its prime
for playing it straight.*

*Thus my liaison
carried them on
dead into danger --
out of the cold
into the fold,
the trap, the manger.*

*Then the quick bullet
skittered the pullet
and murdered one duck
before the wolves lay
dead in the hay.
Such was my luck*

*that father or mother
stayed the other,
withheld their fire;
something, they said
later, they read
of my desire...*

and as they led
each other to bed,
they left ajar
the door, and I
crept in, to lie
with the bone of a star.

-- Edsel Ford

Rogers, Arkansas

The Virtue Of Speed

Time has buried us
Before our time.

As running boys we sped
Across the gravel schoolyard
With such free and faultless strides
Our legs snapped up tightly
Against us from behind.
Speed was good
When cinders flew before
And rolled so much under foot
That only our speed
Kept us from skinning
Shin and shank and palms
In the sharp and bitter gravel.

And once across the yard
We landed in the soft grass
Where delight at shooting dust
Became a cool and easy bounce
In deep green.

But there were always those
Who came behind --
Not whirling speedsters
But gallant boys whom no one loved.
They came jogging up,
Their large chests heaving,
Their noses underlined by red,
Their eyes -- with tears of strain
Squeezing in the corners --

Bright with the expectation
Of joining our games.
But they were too slow;
Youth respects only speed.
We left them standing in the grass
Amazed at their own lack of virtue.
(Somehow we were not ashamed!)
But now that speed
Seems not such a virtue,
We wonder about the big-chested boys
Who were slow afoot,
And we would like to see them
Come thumping up and look at us
As though we had just come
Sprinting across the yard.
We would like to ask them
To let us join their game.
But we went too fast for them.
We'll have to wait
Twelve years after death
For them to catch up;
So we can ask them.

-- Robert Lewis Weeks

Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Heaven Was A Dream I Had

When I awoke my father smiled;
I had come home
from a personal round-about
to smell his world again.

His eyes were red; he knew I knew
that this return
was a chance to repeat goodbyes
before the final stop.

And I look back in silence now;
his time-slash'd face
turns alone in his private night,
but I can't touch his cheek.

-- Ottone M. Riccio

Belmont, Mass.

In The Manner Of E. A. Robinson

*She may be seen when poets read
In prestige places such as Yale;
A lady in her fossil weeds,
Victorian-pale.*

*Her preference is the mature:
Gray-templed, formal and serene.
She is disturbed by the obscure
Or the obscene,*

*For Georgian yet is her milieu,
Nostalgic as her reticule;
The sneering snouts of our day
Are not her school.*

*So, Flora in her floral hat
Snubs "la Galette" again this season.
It's not genteel enough, and that
Is ample reason.*

inscription

*at times my
verses burn in
defiance of the
civilized*

*whoever has
heard bones
snap or voices
twist*

*knows
what
i
mean*

-- Hans Juergensen

Tampa, Florida

Way Laid In The Kitchen (as it were)

Wun does not sleep
with a m(an) wun
luves
h i m.

And luv and liv
and do not be so
cozee
with yr() hus
bundand chil
drenand howskee
ping!

Let me touch you in yours oul.

A m(an) can (luv me!)
luv and be true
for ever and ever to
onetwothreefour and
may be more.

Luv is free (luv me!)
wun mustnt be s(h)
elfish with wuns bodee.

Now wont (she-we-me)
wun seek wuns (luv me!)
under lying meaning?

-- Sonia Topper Weller

Storrs, Connecticut

The Phoenix And The Owl

*Once in an age the phoenix burns,
but wisdom whispers in the owl
that owlish ashes -- though they yearn --
resuscitate no newer fowl.*

-- W. Arthur Boggs

Oswego, Oregon

Point Of Separation

*In almost dusk
apple blossoms incandesce.*

*Above, a squirrel
long is sceptical of my stillness
before his electric descent to grass
that is green nearly unto blue
in the half light, now,
where he is joined by another,
and together they dig as if this hour
were not forever but wanted transplanting.*

*Each word that I thus give up to spring
leaves more room to let your absence in,
until I cannot speak.*

*"I shall be dressed in blue," you said.
I wait for you.*

--Roland Flint

Minneapolis, Minn.

For our seventh issue we have scheduled several parodies that seem quite appropriate. Contributors, so far are: Carl Larsen, Phyllis Onstott Arone, Charles H. Jerred, Gary Elder, and Laurence Mintz. We are interested in receiving more parodies for this issue.

Patrons

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Mr. Davis M. Lapham
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