

FROM THE DIARY OF JOHN DOE

Valentine's Day; 1952.

Having nothing better to do,

I, John Doe, went for a stroll down Main St.

Now I must confess I was given a start

When I saw the first lopsided heart

Chalked on the vacant warehouse wall.

And scrawled in the middle for all to see

Was the legend, DM loves JD.

And the heart was pierced by an arrow.

I saw the next one on the window

Of the butcher shop, and so

I followed the trail of crooked hearts

Past the schoolhouse and the railway station

Out to the fairgrounds. The sun

Was just beginning to set when I found

One freshly carved in a big maple, bleeding sap.

I knew I was getting warm and sure enough through a gap

In the alders I saw the corpse.

She lay curled up in the light snow.

Overhead in the branches a sable crow

Rasped. I kicked some dead leaves over her as best I could

And then waited for the sun to go down
Before taking the back road into town.
And I shall say nothing about this crime

For after all, what should I say?
"Listen, sheriff, I was walking in the woods the other day
And I just happened to run across a body."

And would he then applaud my zeal
Or rather make me feel
That bodies are better left in the woods where they belong?

I don't know who the girl was;
I didn't look at her because
The initials DM meant nothing to me.

Who is the slayer? Who the slain?
I, John Doe, of sound body and sane
Mind, abstain.

James G. Waugh