

John's Thin Arms

John's thin arms
find his
dog
encircle quickened
warm smelly hairy animal
to hug.
Hours upon hours his
mother says he
hugs his
dog he
can't get
enough she
says.

Those Strawberries

Those strawberries
I
can't even eat.
that makes me sad
for they are
large
dark bright red and
on my plate.
to taste the pleasure
of these three
would crowd the others
in my gut.
I would hurt physically.
So I shall sip my coffee
probably leave
my milk too
smoke a cigarette
(I don't inhale)
and stay awhile
in this corner
facing the corner
and let the other people
look if they want to
at my back at
my hair down the gold
sweater
at this woman alone
writing
in a 15¢ Spiral
in a cheap restaurant.

-- LaDonna Brulé

Lincoln, NB

Dr. Farsdale

After the divorce, when Dr. Farsdale moved
into the colonial mansion on the corner,
he went right on healing ills and wounds
and kept the hedges and the lawns in order,

repainted everything until it shone
green shuttered and whitely antiseptic--
one day we saw him carry in his arms,
out of the street, a bleeding epileptic--

and he was always friendly and polite,
Samaritan to any neighborhood,
respectful and respected, but one night
showed a different side of doing good.

"His house," I overheard my mother phone,
"was all lit up like Christmas in mid-June--"
I'd noticed her at windows, looking out.
"--that Filipino houseboy--" she went on--

"a wild party--drunk, naked men--
at least they could have pulled the drapes shut tight,"
behind the horror in her moral tone
hennaed envy peeking through the blind.

Athena May Applewaite

Arthritic in a wheelchair
beside a vase of Ming,
she spoke of Roman noses--
she loved the noble thing.

A stone bust she had sculptured--
her father--stood behind,
dreaming on a pedestal
where she had placed the mind.

"I had to give up carving--
my hands--and start on poems--"
Beyond the window, orange trees
shone brilliant with starred blooms.

"But found a form that was the same
in words as well as stone--
there is a form to everything--
some day it will be known."

The white cat leaped from her lap
and pinkly flicked at fleas.
She wheeled and plucked a book
and held it on her knees

and read a poem about
owls, I think it was--
her white hair like a helmet
shining in the sun.

She could have been Athene,
ancient, and still wise--
but nothing in her poem
touched us like her eyes.

-- Harold Witt

Orinda, CA