

## Honker

In marble patterned formica  
bordering our bathtub there's  
ghost of Canadian honker  
with crippled left wing  
I chased down thru  
Bailey Doris's barley field  
too young too weak to break  
its doublejointed neck...  
my old man rushing up  
said this is only way  
& snapped it like  
a heavy ended whip.

-- Phil Weidman

North Highlands, CA

## Another Dam by Your Army Engineers

You can tell they've been around:  
There are no trees; homes slip  
Like skulls along the mud.  
A mile away, the breast-work  
Rises. Soon power boats and men  
On water skiis will gather there,  
Will suck all weekend long  
Their vague distress. The waters  
Have a darkness; currents panic, enter  
What's left of turbulent air. Trout die  
Of bends. Only, there's a man nearby  
With something like God in his eye.  
He envisions a single dam from East  
To West. Racoons bless themselves  
Over and over when he passes.  
It's grand. He speaks of recreation,  
Of spring and human flood control.

## Phone Call

It's like the buzz a kiss makes.  
But it's the middle of the night.  
And it's the phone with a friend  
Wrapped inside. He says he's been  
Drinking dog's hair for days.  
It's a crisis. Between us,  
Someone listens in. I tell him

To speak in Ovaltine, to use  
His secret ring, but he has  
A sense of mission, of love.  
He lasts until dawn. It's a shock  
To hear a nation's static  
In his voice, to hear him say,  
Stand by, please. I'm temporarily lost.

An Answer

As to your letter of last month:  
I have been here, lately, by fields  
Like fish with soft snow--  
Bellies upward to the year.  
Winds are rising, blue is bluer,  
Further from my eye. Each night  
Something stands on the moon crust  
Moaning of star light. I wish I could  
Describe the sound as it goes  
Through the world. But that is not all:  
There is a lady on the road each day  
With something in her eyes like  
Thunder clouds. She taunts the cars,  
The Diesel rigs. The odds are not good ...  
She's chosen us to blame for storms.  
I wish I could love her. More later.

-- Harry Humes

Breinigsville, PA

The Hubris Blues

"They put me down, man, all those square people in  
Port Arthur; and I wanted them so much to love me."

-- Janis Joplin

I think I understand about Port Arthur. I come from Cedar  
Rapids and I'm not sure, except for the climate and the  
way the people talk, it's so very different.

I left Cedar Rapids 15 years ago and I still feel intimi-  
dated when I go back there. The trick is not to go very  
often. Also, not to think about it very often. I used  
to know somebody in New York who was really bugged by  
Cedar Rapids after 15 years, but that was because she  
thought about it.