

My Orange Sherbert Dog

Why do you lay there  
Staring at me with your melting eyes

Do you wonder  
why I care what you look like  
why I sculpture the tip of your left ear  
so carefully with my silver spoon  
why I take such pains  
to hollow the curve  
between your soggy orange belly  
and the tan stoneware dish  
why I bother to wipe away the liquid  
streaking from your eyes

The answer, my friend,  
to all your wondering  
is simple:

the more beautiful you are  
the better you taste.

-- James R. Scrimgeour

Normal IL

LIZARD LITTLE OLD MAN  
stoned on fireheat

you wriggled your turquoise pattern tail  
around Keith's shoulder

we were drinking seder wine & eating matzos with honey  
under the tall leaning cottonwood.

freezing dusk. all thru the fields of  
sage & bitterbrush

all the lizards were going to sleep  
except you.

little splayfoot stoned man  
pumping your yellow ribs

& you leapt around our circle, under Arlene's  
boots, flicking your black eyes nervously

& grabbed & clung on the firestone,  
stoned gray skull leaning

into the flame, we stumbled  
shouting up -- you stamped your foot

& hurried out into the brown cold  
hunting owl calling

you with a story of the strange beasts who make  
fires hotter than the sun

I shook my grandfather's hand  
"Well, I'll see you in the other world," he said.

I nodded.  
"Yes, on the mountains in the other world."

My grandfather shook his head very slowly.  
"There are no mountains in the other world," he said.

-- John Oliver Simon

Berkeley CA

on judgement

in a place like this, there are bound to be pirates and  
elevator operators. there are bound to be liars, old folks  
at home, selfish people, sunshine people, idiots, cartoon-  
ists, parachutists, third basemen, evangelists, politicians,  
marxists, splinter removers, scissor sharpeners, greens-  
keepers, miracle believers, ice suckers, social workers,  
lone rangers, strangers, fire eaters, good humor men, people  
who are under the false impression that their houses are  
mansions, people who are quite sure they must be the dumbest,  
cotton candy vendors, lumberjacks, neurasthenics, spelunkers,  
little wooden people, soy bean eaters, palsied people, proph-  
ets, conspirators against the boss, sub-contractors, false  
teeth people terrified of apples, swimmers of the english  
channel, climbers of mount everest, strippers, trickers,  
hookers, librarians, exhibitionists, carpenters, firemen,  
yo-yo manufacturers, sex-emanating receptionists, murderers,  
stowaways, hi-jackers, incompetents, whiners, skin-divers,  
gypsies, bubble gum freaks, bearded ladies, midgets, pantied  
men in front of mirrors, cheats, word-keepers, blood-soaked  
soldiers, aviators, yodelers, bee keepers, name callers,  
insect studiers, ticket takers, nose pickers, nose job  
doctors, junkies, smugglers, burglars, burlap bag makers,  
cellists, mumblers to themselves walking down fifth avenue,