

SUBURBAN TYPES

Tops of gray one  
by 12s in backyard  
fence are speckled white.  
Sparrows perch & wait  
twittering nervously  
then skitter up & down  
bullying for position.  
They're tough suburban  
types exposing themselves  
to cats & pellet guns  
for taste of wild  
bird seed supplied  
by reformed BB  
gun killer.

EAST AREA RAPIST

We got a sick one out here.  
Sneaks in on women alone  
during early morning hrs.  
Ties & gags before  
he rapes then hangs  
around two three hrs.  
Yesterday was #17.  
A 16 yr old girl.  
Wears a ski mask  
& has us looking  
each other over  
like never before.

-- Phil Weidman

North Highlands, CA

GROMER WILKIE

Every day men come and squat around Gromer.  
He is the only man in town to weld on Sundays  
or to have the nickel rods to weld a manifold.  
Once he cut a truck in half and welded it together again.  
Gromer knows how to make his little bit,  
and he helps them make their little bit too.  
He lays a pretty good bead.  
And they come and squat around.

MONKEYSHINES

-- for my sister, Judy

Mother has pasted 19 tiny pictures  
of her family into a plastic frame  
and hung it on the kitchen wall.  
In one of them, we are looking out  
the backseat window of the '39 Olds  
with a couple of the Redding cousins.  
The picture divides between their  
discomfort and our monkeyshining.  
Our gooey mouths are spread out  
on the window like two large snails.

I remember riding with you in the front seat  
on vacation near the Black Hills  
the time Dad passed the guy poking along  
pointing out rock formations to his family.  
You stuck your finger far out the window  
mocking him, Dad started honking at him,  
and we all laughed like hell at all of them  
as we passed. The wind knocked our arms  
back and we fell off the seat laughing.  
I loved you for that.

Home for Thanksgiving, twenty years later,  
I go to the kitchen to get a beer.  
As I reach for the light switch,  
I accidentally knock her picture down,  
breaking the frame but not the glass.  
But more interesting is picking it up  
and seeing for the first time, really,  
the four wishbones he has set riding  
along the top of the black frame.  
There is one of them for each of us.  
They lie before me on the table like legs.  
I see the need to make a wish  
and pull the big one apart,  
and I also recognize the wish  
with you not to.

#### HOW TO WIPE YOUR TWO-YEAR-OLD'S NOSE

Grab the tissue  
box and lower it  
slowly to a point  
where she can reach  
in and stay your  
hand while she puts  
the extras back and  
point out what she  
misses then hold your  
tongue as she runs  
into the other room  
to throw it into  
the wastebasket.

#### POEM ABOUT MAKING RUDOLPH THE RED-NOSED REINDEER

If she knew anything she'd quit right now.  
If she knew anything she'd know nothing  
can come from scissors and paste;  
she'd know some other things, she'd know  
Rudolph and Mickey are strictly