

THE RE-EDUCATION OF JAMES ZOLA

remove

these stale images
I want to forget

that elephants
are large

and grey
and wrinkled

give me an elephant
with the colors

of a cat
with the strut

of a teen-age
dancer

-- James Zola

Columbia MO

TO REPEAL THE INVENTION OF SURGICAL NECESSITY

I love not only your sagging tits
but how they sag is love to me
not only because I sag too
but why they sag is our kid
with his wonderful runabouts
movement only emphasizes
the sagginess of beautiful things
which out of context
appear ugly not only
to the untrained eye but
to the fool whose tits can sag
& won't.

JUST PLANE HAIKU

New Jersey is green.
From the airplane I see it
Between parking lots.

Landing in Philly
Lets me think I understand
The nature of man.

Taking off from there
Is another story but
Not worth telling you.

-- Brian Gallagher

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

KADDISH

Flo was a big, good-looking, blond shiksa;
a registered nurse a hypochondriac
fell for and married, once she'd converted.
She played cards with other Jewish ladies.
They had no children, seemed quite contented.

Once Flo disappeared with the Cadillac.
Then she reappeared and what's more, she told
anyone who would listen where she'd been
and why: Flo was driving home from the store
when work on the road forced her to drive slow.

"I saw this gorgeous man stripped to the waist
digging ditches and told him to hop in."
Once Flo was broke, he left her. Her husband
welcomed her back. He died. Flo stood up, dressed
in black, in Temple. She's one of my saints.

BLACK SHEEP

A whole year before she died, my mother
handed me a package wrapped in brown paper, tied.
"This belonged to your Uncle Clarence...." "What did?"
"It's pornography, Michael. Please destroy it."
Before my father died, she'd never said a word.
I promised to throw it out unopened.
As soon as she left the attic I undid
the knot. Pornography? It was a joke book
from the Twenties, privately printed and rare.
I read it sitting under a naked bulb.
At once I knew where Paw got his best stories.
"What he stole," I mused, "he sure could make his own."