

i should try, gerald locklin has made  
his mother very proud of him.

for starters, however,  
it's probably best i try something  
a trifle less arrogant,

something like,  
please buy gerald locklin's books.

#### DROWNING THE HATCHET

because i am so much more insecure  
than i can afford to let myself seem,  
i doubt that any of the women  
i have ever been with  
realize how important, on their best days,  
they have been to my survival.

they are more apt to be aware of how close  
they have come, on their worst days, to assisting  
me in my destruction,  
since i seem to have taken upon myself the mission  
of depicting in print woman at her worst.

but there have been innumerable times  
that i wanted to tell a woman how she had saved me,  
had wanted to publish it to all the world,

but i didn't, for the simple reason that  
the moment when it seemed the right thing to do  
passed,  
after which it seemed the wrong thing.

so here's a toast to all the women i've been with  
on their best days, my worst;  
may they be blessed for having saved,  
my life, my sanity, my sexuality,  
in ascending order of importance.

ah hell, i might as well toast those  
who nearly did me in as well,  
especially since they were so often  
the same person.

-- Gerald Locklin

Long Beach CA