

VALLEY LIVING

It was so hot for early June.
The flies were everywhere, inside
and out. We killed them with
folded newspapers, but more of them
got in, and so we had to kill again.
The slapping sound of death
kept on and on, and later we had
to put on our sandals so we wouldn't step
all over the corpses.
The women drank coffee and water.
The men drank beer and got very drunk
(it was so hot). Finally, as they say,
the day was over and we all went
to bed. In the morning when we got up
all of us looked at the dead flies
and empty bottles and glasses
and everything looked like hell, but
we were quite proud.

OLD TIMES

When I was very young
there was a terrible war
and lots of people died.
I didn't understand too much.
I went to school and loved
to mix the orange powder
into the white margarine.
My family was scattered.
My parents divorced.
And when the war was over
I remember bells ringing
everywhere. I knew I was
supposed to be happy, so
I smiled and said, "horrah."
And Mama said we should be
grateful, and I tried to be.

THE MARATHON MAN & THE AGING POET

I'm getting involved
with a runner.
He's up to 10 miles a day,
working on doing
a marathon in 6 more months.
I walk a 16-minute mile.

I'm falling
for the athletic type.
Worse, he has Ralph Nader
type dreams
of saving a small
section of the globe.
His new job doesn't
pay much
but it involves ethics
& makes him happy.

He's 8 years younger
& likes to get drunk
once a week.
He bares his firm young chest.
I bare my soul.
Drinking may be all
we have in common.

PAUL F.

paul is home with poison oak,
his wife, and his thoughts.
he sits around in his shorts
and itches everywhere.
i write and say, paul, have
you written any new poems?
he says, shove sand.
i think it must be some new
style he has contributed
to poetry. but i can't find
any examples.

REALIZATION

still afraid to fly
after all these years.
something about
being locked up in that machine
even with movies, music,
and drinks.
no sense of freedom.
maybe it isn't the plane.