

AT MIDNIGHT OR LATER

At midnight or later  
when he comes home,  
four nights a week five nights six nights  
we can hear the roar of our neighbor's car  
as he maneuvers it carefully  
into position and drives  
fast backwards up the driveway  
so that at 7:00 the next morning  
he can drive out fast forwards.

-- Ben Yandell

Pasadena CA

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

after/ Gerald Locklin

A few years ago, I remember visiting  
Some old friends of mine in Gardena

They've been married many years,  
And their affection for each other  
Has always been considerable

On a recent anniversary, they'd given  
Themselves a tablecloth upon which  
Were embroidered the words:

WILL YOU STILL NEED ME  
WILL YOU STILL FEED ME  
WHEN I'M 64?

Now, this pop music sentiment gave me  
An idea for a way to sweeten my own marriage  
Which was going sour as somebody's first  
Sousaphone lesson

Already figuring her fondness for the  
Beatles would hold me in heavy favor,  
I take my wife into an uncompromising  
Embrace and whisper the words I dream  
She's been longing to hear:

"Will you still need me, will you still  
Feed me, when I'm 64?"

She lengthily exhales and looks at me,  
With her eyes full of distance, saying  
In that incomparable voice of hers:

"I was thinking about getting rid of you,  
Maybe, a week from Tuesday"

#### CONVERSATIONS & THE NEW POETICS

Koertge & I were born in little  
Illinois towns, so, whenever we  
happen to meet, we never discuss  
the ultimate wedding of literary

politics & poetry; we talk about  
things like how far it is between

Oak Park & Aurora, or, if one were  
in Streater, would Olney be closer

than Ancona

-- Michael C Ford

Westside Station CA

#### THE YEARBOOK

a box, a coffin full of garbage, junk  
left over from high school, and inside  
on top my senior yearbook like Halloween  
all the ghosts returned from the tomb  
screaming, bloody, and knocking about  
my brain. I never joined anything: not  
Latin Club, Spanish Club, History Club,  
Future Teachers, Junior Achievers, Rifle  
Club, Art Club, Science Club, stage crew.  
I never went to my high school proms,  
not a dance, not a hayride, or a basket-  
ball game, not a football game, not  
a free night in the gym. I never  
went out for a sport: not swimming,  
wrestling, track, not football, basket-  
ball, baseball, soccer or any of those  
boy games. my fellow students hated me,  
generously, and I hated them. I flip  
through the pages, glossy pages, they  
feel like a pornographic magazine. I