

TWO COUSINS

She had written twice
but we had never met
before she visited me
in the Valley last year.
My webfoot cousin
from Washington State
born and raised on
the Olympic Peninsula
a nice woman with
impeccable John Birch
credentials
but she seemed more
like a stranger from
another planet
though she said we
had poetry in common
as well as our 1810
ancestor from Tennessee.
The poetry part didn't
set too well with me
Cousin writes only of
mist and Douglas firs
and wet swordleaf fern
she even said she
hated the brazen
California sun
it had no respect for
the sensitive soul
yet she went home
really happy
said I must visit her

NITPICKER

Iris complains about the silliest
trifles, coffee grounds left in the
pot. Her Dad boils them over and over.
Says it gets all the strength out. That
shouldn't really bother Iris. She
doesn't live with her Dad anyway. And
he is good to that woman. Helps make
her car payment each month. She said
he can afford to help me. He lives like
a miser. She is just a born nitpicker
I guess.

GENETIC PATTERN

They say Nonie's niece
is just as crazy as
Nonie ever dared to be
about that poetry writing
maybe even worse
and her only fourteen
it has to be something in
their family genes

MR. MATSON'S SUPER ABUNDANCE

A tarpapered house
is good enough for me
keeps out the rain
and cold in winter

And the swamp cooler
works real fine in summer

I've got grub in my fridge
and on my shelves
enough for one big family

And in my closet
I've got three pairs of shoes
one good Sunday suit
and seven shirts

God help me
if I'm not satisfied
with all of that

Then there's something
bad wrong with me

— Wilma Elizabeth McDaniel

Hanford CA