

## BLAME IT ON JACK

after glasses of white wine  
and reading Li Po and  
Kerouac's "Some Western Haiku"  
I fell into bed  
tickling my wife drunkenly  
then dreamed of  
endless mountains  
shrouded in fog  
and the quiet  
of drizzle  
in old redwood forests.

Blame it on Jack and Li Po  
if this poem reads  
Oriental.

## TIME TO CHANGE THE FURNACE FILTER

when it's covered in a coat of dog hair  
thick as the fur on a Surrealist tea cup.

## BATS

I'm coming up  
the sidewalk  
telling my wife  
how lately I'm feeling depressed  
a little cracked  
when I take a bad step  
stumble, fall  
twisting my ankle  
wrenching my knee  
then smashing the same knee  
against the concrete steps  
of the porch, banging  
my elbow in the process.  
It hurts like hell  
and I'm cursing  
and groaning  
in true physical pain  
instantly cured  
for a while anyway  
of my mental anguish.

Inside the house  
I limp to the sofa,  
pull up my pants leg  
and see



the joint already swelling,  
a big purple bruise  
forming.

I stay in the chair,  
read some passages from  
old Jack Kerouac's  
SCRIPTURE OF THE GOLDEN ETERNITY,  
feel much better  
spiritually and don't  
really mind the  
injured knee, in  
fact, it's somehow  
comforting.

About 9:00 pm  
I take the dog out  
for her nightly piss  
and an average sized black  
bat flies over  
about a total distance of 100 feet  
from the tall trees  
across the road  
and into the dark trees  
clustered in our back yard.

The bat  
makes me think of  
Bela Lugosi horror films of the 1940s,  
except this is no monster  
and hardly a killer.

Later I catch  
half an episode of DOBIE GILLIS  
off cable tv, and get to  
wondering if anyone plays  
the bongos anymore.  
I remember seeing once  
a photo of Kerouac  
playing the congas  
at a Beat rent party.

I wonder if Jack K.  
saw bats  
when he did his Buddhist  
meditations  
in the woods  
at midnight  
and if they  
helped any.

— David Barker

Salem OR