

CRUISING WITH THE EDITOR  
(REMEMBERING MARVIN MALONE)

I guess,  
for argument's sake  
you could say  
the first time I met Marvin Malone  
was during a Caribbean cruise  
somewhere back in the mid-fifties.

The liner had sailed from the Mexican port  
of Veracruz late the night before—  
after much revelry.

Next morning, as the eager prow  
aimed us toward our first port of call,  
pre-Castro Havana,  
I was swiftly circling the deck  
in a vain attempt to quiet my pounding head.

Finally realizing that a more radical  
remedy than sun-shot sea breeze  
was needed to cure the hangover,  
I headed for the bar.

Two Martians draped in what seemed to be  
strings of blinking Christmas tree lights  
& sporting stainless-steel sun visors  
brushed past me as I entered.

After downing half a double Bloody Mary,  
my eyes became accustomed  
to the dim mauve lighting of the lounge,  
& I noticed that Ernie Hemingway  
was sitting at one of the round chrome tables  
in the company of a serious-looking chap  
I did not recognize.

Wishing to greet my old friend,  
I took my drink over to their table,  
at which time he introduced me  
to his companion:

"This is Marvin Malone, editor of editors," he said.

Marvin Malone's handshake was firm,  
as he cautioned, "Never forget, what seems seamless  
is never without seams."

Yes, I have never forgotten this most insightful  
of all editors' remarks.

So, as far as I can remember,  
this was my first meeting with the esteemed  
editor Marvin Malone.

The two Martians—I never saw those buggers again.

—Richard M. West

Bainbridge Island, WA

POETRY  
(for Marvin Malone)

Reading the really dangerous stuff is like  
sweating  
bullets and nitroglycerin in Death Valley.

Writing it is like John Dillinger whittling  
a block  
of balsa in a jail cell in Crown Point, Indiana.

Publishing it requires more than a small press,  
it takes a tempered mind that can sort through  
the noise

in a temple of drunken monkeys and come up with  
a few poems that sound suspiciously like  
literature.

—Gene Mahoney

Vineyard Haven, MA