

HAWK

&

WHIP

POOR

WILL

RECALLED

HAWK AND WHIPPOORWILL RECALLED

Volume II, No. 1

Autumn 1974

From 1960 to 1963 the late August Derleth was editor and publisher of the magazine, *Hawk and Whippoorwill, Poems of Man and Nature*. In autumn 1973 the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets brought out the first issue of *Hawk and Whippoorwill Recalled*. Many of the poets whose work appeared in the original magazine are contributors to its successor. A number of new writers, both from Wisconsin and out of state, are also represented. Due to lack of space publication is restricted to once a year.

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Frank Moulton

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QUEENIE, CRYING IN THE STREET

Oh, Queenie, ragbag woman of the street,
 The street is tranquilized. Its polished tongue,
 Which earlier this gone day has flapped, tastes
 Sighs from its distemper. Expurgated
 Shops with half-draped manikins dim their lights
 In benediction to the pause in tramp —
 Time beat. X-rated cinemas still bark
 Along the stretch where Queenie's pushed her cart,
 Filled with cans more precious than her years, lips
 Dripping drops of old worn beer, as useless
 As her tears. Her toes like snails protruding
 From knife-slashed moccasins, tradition's shells
 From mudflat days, which she remembers well:
 A mother forming corncakes on the hearth,
 A father filching work from china joss.
 Her feet must argue like two monger wives
 In hard soled shoes. Gray is the color death
 Wailers bring to mourning, and wailing is
 Her hair. Children poke fun at her slow tramp,
 Can map the city rumped as the bluffs
 Upon her face of jowls and granite lines.
 The limestone bluffs slant to the fields Yokut
 Men once plowed to feed their spawn, of which she
 Proudly boasts, "This is mine, my *place*. My
 Blood runs here as fierce as Kern's strong coursing.
 She keeps a tank of river water in
 Her hut to which she doles out boarded crumbs
 To gobbling blind cavefish. (They've eaten all
 The angels.) Oh, Queenie, in your wander,
 Don't forget to sing a song for us. It
 Makes life holy for the rest of us, who
 May never know the penance found in rags.

— Frederick A. Raborg, Jr., California

ON THE DEATH OF W. H. AUDEN

October 1973

How is it now in England
where time and fevers burn away
in the endless sea,
where voices in the streets
sprinkle their trifling prose
like runners running in place
with no goal?

Does the euphoric dream still come
in the night's innocence?
Do fabled knights stand guard
over worlds of good and bad,
jousting in historic plains?

Here in America the mouth of autumn
tastes of carmen, gold, musk
and the bitter blue of farewell.
Greening days of spring dovetailed
in summer, hot green weeks
gone gold, the poet's residence
abandoned, we are thrice bereft.

Fogs of confusion blew in yesterday
as lights dimmed down to black
when breath stopped in England
for our shared Auden. No land
sustains its order when men die
who lived with twice the fervor and intent
of all their brothers. *Time*
*breaks the threaded dances.**

China and Africa have met.
Shadowed days are done. A healing fount
flows through the poet's quiet heart.
His flaming torches ever burn
to light an affirming creed:
*We must love one another or die.***

— Dorothy Westring, Wisconsin

*SONG: AS I WALKED OUT ONE EVENING — Auden
**SEPTEMBER 1, 1939 — Auden

THE TRIP

There are two ways to reach
the far shores of the mind
where dreams spray in kaleidoscopes
against the bluffs of reason
and nebulae come close enough
to earth for grasping.
You chose the short cut.
Now you sit and stare
and think you are an orange.

Better you had crawled there
over rocks of time and failure,
tears, forgiveness, second chances —
driven by a white, insistent love.
Then you could bear seeing
that reality above reality —
and know you are a man.

— Jo Bartels Alderson, Wisconsin

THE ONCE-FOREST

Charcoal spikes are driven into too blue skies.
 There should be clouds to weep
 the death of white pine children —
 sunlight should not mock their bones this way.
 Sandy furrows torn into the earth
 in desperate bid to stop the massacre
 trace failure's path through inky, barren ash.
 Crowning here, the killer sprang the break,
 capriciously devouring peak and sparing brush.

All that moves now is one porcupine.
 Confused and old, he plods with outplayed feet,
 too tired for further fright,
 his own hunger all he comprehends.

Will carnage make us also porcupines,
 scavenging incinerated relics of
 our own once-world?

— *Jo Bartels Alderson, Wisconsin*

OH, MY!

Hear! Hear!
 The darling deer
 Are eating
 All the fresh shoots
 Of hemlocks' lacy green
 And making it
 Disappear
 From our forest scene.

— *Lida W. McBeath, Wisconsin*

CAVE OF THE MOUNDS

Man is not weightless here though corridors
 of stillness capture eeriness of space;
 nor is there sign of life as we explore
 a sweep that counterparts the open face
 of earth: immobile cirrus and hurricane
 on rock horizon, falls of rippled stone.
 The casks of jewels where meteorites have lain
 might be Niobe's tears. On quartzite throne
 the lifeline drips a silence in sculptured rain.

All subterranean recall antiquities
 where trolls enticed Peer Gynt to Mountain King,
 or Faustus grappled with Mephistopheles;
 of Alberich forging the magic Rhinegold Ring,
 or Aida's wish to die with Radames.

This cave was old before Demosthenes spoke.
 Each layered mineral testifies an age
 in backdrop veins like Joseph's envied cloak;
 other dimensions science yet must gauge.
 When alphabet and lens record its scope,
 entering, let reflection mute the sage.

— *Edna Meudt, Wisconsin*

MAIDEN-HAIR

Maiden-hair, blood root,
 arbutus, pine —
 trail of bull-dozer.

— *Anne Stubbe, Wisconsin*

JULIA

She called the loft her own
 Though cows were housed below
 And hay was in the mow
 She went there when she wished to weep
 Or reason with her heart
 Or break the mental leash
 Which held her to her kin
 She went there when the rain poured down
 To trickle on the kitchen wall
 Where it leaked around the stove-pipe rim
 And made the soot smell come
 Or when it drizzled frail as mist
 And the window pane
 High in the loft
 Was garnished with the sliding drops
 She sometimes stayed until evening fell
 When early stars
 Were tiger eyes
 In folds of gray
 That dimmed the path
 Back to the house
 Where her sorrows were in limbo
 Without a heart to lodge in
 Until she returned

— *Gladys S. Sundby, Wisconsin*

BEND DOWN

Bend down and listen:
 Even this small lonely pine
 Sighs in the Spring wind.

— *Thelma Murphy, Minnesota*

HOLLYOAK VIGNETTE NO. 4

I cross a narrow triangle
 Of clover between fence and creek;
 On the far bank a grazing mule
 Looks drenched with rain, dark brown and sleek.

A boy comes running into sight
 Over the little grassy hills.
 He shouts. The grazing mule takes fright,
 Turns and runs, kicking up his heels.

The boy laughs and takes up a stick,
 Tosses it after the mule for fun.
 The mule gives his hind legs a flick
 And moves off at a run.

He stops a few yards up the hill,
 Grazes and stares, as if in wonder
 Why in this pasture he should feel
 Fear of a thing less loud than thunder.

— *Grant Code, New York*

FARM WORLD

Richening, ripening sinks the sun.
 An apricot orchard along the road
 sags, a line of afternoon trees
 where all the bees of light are hived.

Cows are moving in their stalls
 and a creaming quiet fills the barn.
 Opulent owls mellow the shadow
 folded around the farm.

Over the barn looms a yellowjacket star.

— *William Stafford, Oregon*

FANTASIA FOR CHURCH ORGAN

Recitando

Methodists profess to scorn
bingo, Pope and Barleycorn;
Lutherans, hosts to some of these,
shun secret societies;
Baptists from Detroit to Devon
must be immersed to hope for heaven.
Episcopalians seldom see
eye to eye or knee to knee.
Roman Catholics adhere
to doctrines now not always clear.
Fundamentalists, Presbyterians
have their own unique criterion
for living out their Christian days
according to their several ways,
each with pride and resolution
negating alternate solution.

Amarevole

Jesus, dead for love of men,
is crucified again, again
on cross of custom,
proper diction,
man-made rights,
tight conviction,
each cross a wooden shibboleth,
each word a nail, each nail a death;
trivia obscures the Lord
impaled upon the church's sword.

Diminuendo

Peace on earth grows misty-hued
behind a vast incertitude.

Crescendo con furio

Unbelievers laugh
and yell
and take their chances
on hearsay hell.

Largo

But look! See how love still stands
quiet, patient in the lands,
waiting for the church to see
deeper than its carpentry.
Burning with a quiet flame
he calls your name!

— Dorothy Westring, Wisconsin

HERON HILL

There is a cousin in Virginia still,
Too old and fragile to attend today
The final funeral here on Heron Hill.
Like sun strength fading into twilight grey,
This last reminder of a noted name
Is left with few to mourn. The family farm
Will soon be sold; its privacies fair game
For brash intruders, unversed in its charm.
The traffic pours, a steady waterfall
Past copses where confederate soldiers lay.
The lily pond is gone; the roses all
Unkempt reminders of a gentler day.
The mourners leave; they have their evening chores;
Behind them silence closes gates and doors.

— Alice Mackenzie Swaim, Pennsylvania

ZERO HOUR

Barn lights keep vigil but, beyond
 The amber iris of their eyes,
 Night had no face. The world woke up
 This morning gasping in surprise
 For all these wooded hills slept white;
 And something which was once begun,
 Has ended here. The valley is
 In shock; and stillness follows snow . . .

When I greet winter, cold bites bone;
 My breath spins cotton candy air.
 The only warmth that I can see
 Is Hereford eyes which follow me
 While feed bunk mouths gulp bales of hay
 And razored ax speaks to the brook.
 Then home my feet will take me where
 My chimney talks to neighbors there.

This earth has many voices yet.
 For autumns lost I feel no sorrow;
 Since every winter has its reason
 And every spring its own tomorrow.

— *Marian Paust, Wisconsin*

LAST WORD

What could I speak to make you stay,
 When you left nothing that I might say,
 When you feared more the storm of love,
 Then the thundering rumble around and above,
 When you held my torch too lightly,
 And didn't wait to know the flame?

— *Herbert Kubly, Wisconsin*

WHITE NIGHT

Two shadows led us through the night's new snow,
 Two forms breaking the calm of fallen stars,
 Our steps cut drifts, as curved sharp scimitars.
 We sought a warmth to strike our isles a blow,
 Forgetting that with self we won't be done;
 We offered pledges like vows from ancient scrolls —
 As steps cut snow our words cut to our souls,
 With joy we saw our shadows become one.

When I walked back the same paths, but alone,
 I faced a blustery sting, a bleak cold storm,
 Wind pierced my coat, and heat from flesh was blown;
 The steps we'd pressed in snow had lost all form,
 I knew with flakes of days, with swirl of years
 The heart you'd seared with words, you'd freeze with jeers.

— *Herbert Kubly, Wisconsin*

SOMETHING IS PULLING

Does form conduct the rabbit to his end?
 (He'll crouch, then sit and wag his foolish ears
 instead of leaving when the wolf appears.)
 Some attitude innate he may not mend?
 So with the golden buck who stands at gaze
 to mark the curious way the arrow flits;
 the passenger on sinking craft who sits
 as though indulgent to the ancient water's ways.

Do wanton gestures such as these express
 some vague mistrust of life as puerile trick
 invented by an angry, bored and sick
 old demon which the self may not confess?

Something is pulling — call it death wish, or
 a sense of summons all seem listening for.

— *Rhoda DeLong Jewell, California*

JONATHAN

Today I walked through echoes,
 each one spilling color after
 your name. Jonathan sparkled
 orange beneath the bridge.
 Swelled in yellow bubbles
 beneath the arch. Jonathan
 bounced from grass in sapphire
 blaze. Leaped in scarlet flush
 across the streams. Jonathan
 dazzled the trees with silver flame.
 Burst in brilliant blue from
 rock and stone.

Jonathan Jonathan
 An echo of color in
 this tarnished time.

— *Sandi Herschel, New York*

ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS

I once knew a man who had built
 Many bouquets of plastic greenery.
 In tea-rooms, coffee-shops, and cafes
 For decoration, a bit of scenery.

I once asked him, "Could you make a tree —
 A towering, shady tree with extensive
 Leafy branches?" Thinking a bit, he said,
 "Yep, I could, but it'd be too expensive."

— *Maureen L. Beaver, Wisconsin*

A STORY

He set out to snatch
 The nuthatch,
 White breasted,
 Found where she nested.
 She looked from her house:
 "Come back
 When you're a black
 Belted kingfisher
 Or a flicker,
 Red-shafted.
 Right now you're
 A titmouse,
 Barely tufted."

CALLS

The catbird mews.
 The crow caws.
 We hear the long nicker
 Of the yellow shafted flicker
 and the sea-call
 of the gull.
 But when —
 in what field or fen —
 Does the godwit speak
 or the shrike shriek?

BLUEGRASS

Bluegrass country can give you trouble,
 But nobody went so far astray
 As the fellow who thought the Nashville warble
 Came from the throat of the Grand Ole Osprey.

— *Conrad Hilberry, Michigan*

PREMATURE CALF

This morning in the field
 I saw a calf, fresh as the day.
 And there my new friend lay . . .
 ribs, fur-cloaked brown and white.
 His two eyes, blue and bright,
 stared open at the sun.
 His little mouth gaped wide
 and curious flies explored inside.
 The tongue hung loose . . .
 As it grew black, the scent was strong
 and all his little breaths were gone . . .
 The perfume, growing sweet,
 told me death was quite complete.
 He came into this world too soon;
 and though she waited patiently,
 he never knew a mother's love
 or tasted of the sap of life.
 His breath a myth, her sorrow bloomed.
 Though time brought small acceptance
 to her mind, still, thought
 refused to yield; and gently
 through the sun's remaining hours,
 she made a path that linked the grassy place
 she grazed to where he filled
 his lonely space.

— *Marian Paust, Wisconsin*

A LADY-BUG

A lady-bug
 A timothy
 A boy entranced —

— *Anne Stubbe, Wisconsin*

THE CARDIOGRAM

Like ancient furrows on depleted land
 His cragged features, harrowed by the years
 To gnarled complacency; a firebrand
 Extinguished by time's candle trimming shears.
 At fourteen years a veteran of the sea
 Where fear expressed brought ridicule and scorn,
 He learned the toughness of conformity
 To danger: typhoons, perils of the Horn
 Where sailing vessels floundered, tides that wracked;
 Inured to comfort . . . ships that were accurst,
 The wormy biscuits and the water lacked,
 Cold iron on the tongue to slacken thirst.
 Far inland now only his bedside chart
 Nurse supervised, proclaims his storm tossed heart.

— *Inga Gilson Caldwell, Wisconsin*

RECRUDESCENCE

My mother sighed, telling me of the blight
 That fell upon the eastern woods to seize
 Only the loveliest, the great chestnut trees,
 That martial summer before she saw the light.
 She knew them as those great trunks, weathered white
 Fresh saplings danced around; but even these
 Sickened in few years of the old disease —
 Lately we heard some lived, in its despite.
 — Lives then the single soul of Man's great race?
 — A rain-bleached trunk, and yet a stubborn root
 That keeps on sending up shoot after shoot
 That we forget not quite the primal grace
 But hope, and weep, and hope again, till one
 Shall live, and strengthen, and attain the sun . . . ?

— *Beatrice Cameron, Wisconsin*

LAST VISIT

Sunshine slanted on the grass deep enough
 To wet the feet with summer dew;
 From a safe elm branch
 A red squirrel barked his protest
 Of the distant jet.

The cat looked hopefully
 For meat scraps in a dish,
 Then took to shelter in forsythia
 As the sound grew overhead.

The light warm air
 Held fragrance from the rose
 In the diminished garden,
 But the jet's roar drowned the chirping
 Of the sparrow sprighting on the fence.

The jet eased off into the unseen distance,
 Leaving maples green and quiet
 And the swallows flitting
 With an unheard song.

I ran to catch the jet.

— *Beryl E. Hoyt, Wisconsin*

MORNING

In solitary quiet we dream,
 we wives, we mothers,
 Dream of all the things undone
 and for solace
 Go out and wash the breakfast dishes.

— *Donna Cole, Wisconsin*

ASSESSMENT, IN PASSING

There is a random-routed
 tamped-earth path
 I often traverse
 past blue-blossomed wild flax,
 bridelike Queen Anne's lace,
 purple-flossed thistles,
 assorted grasses, and masses
 of other man-dubbed "weeds" —
 in helter-skelter happenstance —
 tessellating the field.

This bountiful wildness
 creeps close to a manscaped, inched-out,
 precision-planned shopping center —
 concreted, lightpoled, metallized,
 glassed and auto-convenienced
 to the *soopah-doopah* nth degree.

Is someone taking long looks —
 expansionwise?
 tractwise? —
 towards this plot,
 holding off plow and excavator
 only because
 the price is not yet right?

Or,
 could it be
 the acreage owner
 is resisting jingling offers
 insisting instead
 that in this far corner of the city
 wild blooms and grasses shall abound,
 broadcasting huzzas of color
 to delight passersby
 such as I?

— *Florence Lindemann, Wisconsin*

THE GREEN DAY

In a green grotto once
 far from my father's house
 far from my mother's call
 were rocks limed green with time
 and shadows flickering green
 against the wall.

My fascination led my fear
 where jade-green waters
 fingered jade-green stone.
 I crawled inside
 a subterranean dream
 or story I had known.

A cavern hung in blue-green tapestry,
 and chartreuse flowers breathed
 a pale green air.

A mint-green pool was mirroring
 a water nymph who sank
 as I stood staring there. . . .

— *Nelle Fertig, California*

THE LOTUS

In silence
 I watched the mist
 Which rises from the sea
 Settle in your eyes,
 And I was afraid
 Of the dawn.

— *Martha Vertreace, Illinois*

THEY COME

they come and go,
 the children's voices
 in the wind

— *Martin Shea, California*

THE NIGHT-PEDDLAR AND THE WOMAN ON THE BRIDGE

I have a room
 to rent one large room.
 It is comfortable
 yes I have lived there
 quietly on occasion.

There are no walls
 so the darkness flows
 through your veins freely.

I have a room
 to let yes one room.
 It is comfortable
 you may stay there with me
 quietly on occasion

or you may buy it.
 The price is high
 but I am a nice man.

— *Scott H. Mulrane, Ohio*

CARNIVAL AIR

Life presents
 moving targets.
 Two bits for three balls
 and bull's-eye accuracy
 can net an armful
 of plushy things. . . .
 The falling ducks
 never die,
 (I wonder why?)
 But prizes deteriorate.

— *Dorothy Osner, Wisconsin*

I AM VERTICAL

Within this bald life,
 Uncarved, useless,
 Faceless as a plate of soup,
 The world is stirring like blown paper;
 My absence is inconspicuous,
 No one misses me
 While I melt like sugar.

The gulls have threaded their lives,
 The wind has carved a pattern
 With the sun and sky fulfilling
 Their purpose of glint and cloudbank

There is a life higher than syrup
 And I try to rise and stand,
 To reach as a tree for space,
 With a will and strong bones
 I step forward claiming my destiny;
 Refusing to dissolve.

— *Dorothea Hardy Proctor, Oklahoma*

— dead alive —

i do not attend funerals
 fearing
 a nightmare slip at graveside
 gradual sliding into cool earth
 above dim sky/appropriately sad faces
 lips mouthing
 how natural/how nice
 i fear politeness most

— *Diane Nichols, Wisconsin*

ANNIVERSARY

The red salt sun sinks to the sea,
 To taunt my own mortality,
 The blood of gods it draws to death,
 To raise in life tomorrow's dawn.

I long the infinity of your eyes, and wait,
 The moon — crystal cooled of love,
 Longs the light that warmed it once,
 The endless surging sea spends itself,
 In white steeds that never are spent,
 So is my love.

It was you said life was love or yearn for death,
 Then you spurned love. How can I know?
 Has your soul fled the transient world,
 And found the destiny that gave it birth?
 I brush a sand flea from my thigh,
 I sigh. Another year's gone by.

— *Herbert Kubly, Wisconsin*

BORROWED THOUGHT FROM THE CHINESE

Inscribe on my heart
 not Puccini's hour of waiting,
 but every inch of the time at sunset;
 then it is in the amethyst twilight,
 I think of you,
 my family and friends,
 ——— how much I long
 to talk with you.

— *Edmund L. Binsfeld, Minnesota*

THE BESTMAN

He walked aunt Lena to her seat
 Then, smiling, weaved through dancers on the floor
 To his place at the head table.
 Fair Rosanna all in red, flushed
 On the wine from her uninvited guest,
 Kicked off her shoes
 And gave his hoped-for kiss away.
 He missed the bridal-party dance.
 The bestman couldn't just leave; he had to stay
 To see his reputation fall,
 In their eyes, like his curly hair,
 Brain-strained, had fallen while his nosy glass looked on.
 To college friends
 He's always told of his Italian blood:
 It made him different as he was.
 He watched Rosanna dance her pelvis out
 And fade into the nosy room.
 If he's had strength to make new wine
 Flame out of empty flasks to mouths and eyes,
 He would have flown
 Like no bald eagle from the hall.

— *Gianfranco Pagnucci, Wisconsin*

AUTUMN

sunbathing . . .
 yellow leaves falling . . .
 hoeing the garden . . .
 finding a yellow leaf. . . .

— *Joyce W. Webb, Wisconsin*

IT HAPPENED

A rumpled bed,
 stains on the carpet,
 a dripping faucet,
 daylight looks through
 dirty windows.
 Grease on the stove
 smokes at breakfast
 above sticky linoleum.
 It is always the same,
 like the front page of a newspaper
 with a whore's boldness
 the rooms expose their drabness —
 it will never change.

But it does change, it will never be the same.
 You brought affectionate hands
 and words clean and bracing,
 not a kiss, not even a touch,
 just the fragrance of appearance
 to fill the whole house.
 It will never be the same,
 it has all changed.

— *James Hearst, Iowa*

HAIKU

Pushed by the Gulf storm
 Sea birds fly landward; small craft
 Follow them, wave-bounced.

— *Mary B. Wall, Louisiana*

FREE TO THE WIND

Today I am to the wind, and free
 To the breath of sea,
 To the flight of geese,
 To the white birch tree,
 Free to the wind!

Free from the fetters of lust,
 From the combat of dust,
 From mother and brother,
 From cocktails at seven,
 And Jesus at eleven.

Why do I build
 A house on the plain,
 Knowing I must rise,
 Again and again,
 Free to the wind?

— *Herbert Kubly, Wisconsin*

HOME-SITE, REVISITED

Twisted and flattened corn stalks
 catching the silver gleam of
 first-mist and struggling sun —
 black loam, whitened grass above,
 toy barns on distant slopes,
 whisk broom elms like twigs upthrust
 and tangled partridge growth
 of haw and berry that, I know, must
 host somewhere in this roadside dust
 white-speckled stones I buried here
 one summer day in my seventh year.

— *Anne Stubbe, Wisconsin*

SALEM PARK

I
 It was quiet there,
 Lincoln's cabin,
 the iron kettle, and mill.
 Not even children were loud.

II
 They wondered
 at the low quilt bed,
 long handle tools
 on the wall, hard chairs,
 and split-log fence.

III
 Even now there are trees,
 no fire
 of sun.

IV
 The logs inside are cold.
 The floors hold darkness
 as a cave.

V
 It was a long walk,
 dusty
 from summer tourists.

no deer,
 nothing unexpected.

but the spare intuition
 of reflective bones
 in summer.

— *Ed Orr, Illinois*

JOURNEYS IN FOG

I

By Sea

We embarked on the doubtful island trip
 Against the warning moan of Rockland's foghorn.
 Avoiding shrouded craft in Camden Harbor
 We met much denser fog off Curtis Island,
 Adhesive fog that blurred the running lights
 And fringed the red and green of port and starboard.
 Losing the lighthouse beam we ourselves were insular,
 No link to land was left on the shifting sea.
 Checking compass and watch our captain reckoned
 Running time as he switched off the engine.
 He listened and we, too, listened to endless waves
 Sloshing us in the rocking trough of the sea.
 Then the clanging Ensign Island buoy . . .
 Changing course we cruised along a shore
 Where surging surf was pounding granite ledges.
 At last we saw a blurred corona, no grail,
 But a light on the dock, the beacon of safe arrival.

II

By Land

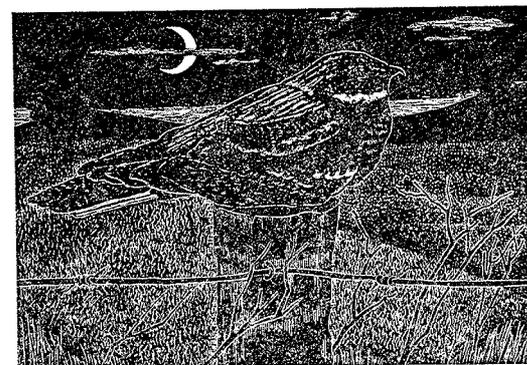
Another time we climbed an unseen mountain
 Following highway lines between the rows
 Of dripping evergreens twisted by ocean winds
 Spawned from Arctic currents flowing south
 Into the rising tides of the Gulf of Maine.
 The highway coiling upward led to nowhere.
 Swathed in fog a solid appearing sign:
 "Cadillac Summit — One Quarter Mile."
 There was no summit and no distance — nothing.
 The grandeur of the heights denied us we sought
 The lowland road — the highway to waiting home.

III

By Air

But journeys by sea and land were long ago,
 Youthful quests for holy grails were forgotten
 Until today when the airplane climbed through fog
 To meet a sky of blinding sunshine above
 The sere and brown of Simi mountain peaks,
 Inland islands scorched by summer drought.
 Our pilot jokes but watches darting dials
 With experienced eyes. Losing mountain guideposts
 There remains no earth, no sky, no sea.
 Although suspended in smothering, drifting whiteness
 We cleave the fog in scheduled pattern of flight.
 Losing altitude we see the tidy blocks
 Of ramified Los Angeles, no island of rest,
 Only a place to change for other places.
 Our quest continues however thickly the grail
 Is veiled from the sight of weary but profane eyes.

— *Joyce W. Webb, Wisconsin*



THE SEALIGHT

the sealight quivers
 under the warm pines

— *Michael McClintock*

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EXTENDED CARE

In room 603 to visit a patient
 bedded against the far wall
 I swerved to bypass
 a ghost in a wheelchair
 skellum hand pounced
 kittened onto my wooly sleeve
 the kept in child peering
 through stoned lights
 her revved up love
 harping rattle bones —
 in a body quake
 I plied green flake fingers
 out of elbow fat
 but she made beggers mark
 wide yellow streak
 and calcium eyed
 down to marrow
 I wish she hadn't done it —
 Jenny Bergman kissed my hand.

— *Frances May, Wisconsin*

SEEING THE HAWK

seeing the hawk
 nice way
 to die
 to feed a thing
 like that

— *Michael McClintock, California*

Reprinted from MAN WITH NO FACE, Shelters Press

I HEAR THE RATTLE BEATING RAPID ON THE RAIL

I hear the rattle beating rapid on the rail,
 wabbling South along the sea,
 the trees flipping past my window,
 and dreams click a stick in porch-rail style.
 I hear the years beating rapid on the rail,
 sweeping old days in the distance beyond,
 raising dead laughters in the dust of a road,
 with mountains waving grey in the sky.
 The rhythm of the wheels sings in the dark
 songs cradled from country fields,
 swelling epics from the smell of the grass,
 when travel alone would man a boy,
 and strength shot out from a turned-up collar.
 The ride is more in my eyes than on the rail,
 in parades what were or might have been,
 into the eternal scent of first love's yes,
 to the laughter in circles blued late in the bar.
 I ride through ten thousand nights alone,
 where despair and promise dance wickedly free,
 where the outside fades in the dark coach glass,
 clearing by mile my rain-spotted stare.

— *Michael Tritto, New York*



NOUVEAU RICHE

When they send those checks
 (the ones over ten dollars)
 I wish that they'd send cash
 — single green bills, crisp from the mint —
 that I could heap on the table.

I'd play a solitary Monopoly
 — and I'd be my own bank
 and I'd croon greedy tunes to the paper
 and smile with a purchased happiness.

When that game ended
 I would litter the floor
 with my lucre tossed all about
 and I'd leap around
 playing mercenary hopscotch
 while my mind bought
 . . . that
 old
 candy
 store. . . .

— *Alice Whitcher, California*

CLEANING

cleaning
 old hiking boots
 gently as i could
 from the mud peeled
 a butterfly wing

— *Michael McClintock*

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THE INTERVIEW

We are very impressed
 with your background.
 It's not everyday
 we get an applicant
 healthy and sound
 who worked his way out
 of the mailroom
 through Yale
 and spent 20 years
 at a profession
 proving himself capable
 beyond any doubt.
 But unfortunately
 even though your experience
 is well above average,
 we must confide
 that past 40
 you are
 over-qualified.

ROLE

In this office I am the wife
 and the mother.
 Not even Bette Davis
 could play this part
 with as much conviction.

SORRY CHARLIE

Only the best bosses
 earn the right to play God.

— *El Gilbert, New York*

ROCK CARVINGS

How many generations past
 had some man (or woman) sat
 upon a rock before this sheer
 cliff face and carved
 his hieroglyphic art
 upon this limestone shore?

A child's face, with wings
 on either side; did he mourn
 a child called to his death
 too soon, the sadness in his heart
 relieved by this memorial
 etched in stone?

A man in a canoe, plying
 paddle to one side;
 himself, perhaps, a friend,
 or someone of his family?
 No name. Straight-backed
 he sits, a puzzle for posterity.

Some summers, washed by waves
 inundated and hidden from sight,
 all but forgotten, then once more exposed
 to delight discoverers like me
 who walk Rock Island's shore
 and glimpse Eternity.

— *Phyllis Maples, Wisconsin*

ETERNITY NOW

I think
 God knows
 what He's about
 and waits for us
 inside our time to know —

we move between
 outside each other
 seldom toward
 or touching
 accepting only
 what we'd return
 if someone asked.

measuring the distance
 balancing
 with our toes tight
 to self-conscious marks,
 we ignore acceptance
 that part of eternity
 already here.

— *Lou Roach, Wisconsin*

HAIKU

January thaw . . .
 the sound of running water
 under the brook's ice.

Mountain peaks below . . .
 islands in the rumpled sea
 of morning ground fog.

— *Joyce W. Webb, Wisconsin*

REFLECTIONS ON AN EMPTY SCHOOLHOUSE

June: They are gone
 The wild ones with
 Muddy boots
 One mitten
 No buttons
 The shy ones with
 Many dreams
 Bad dreams
 No dreams at all
 In our loneliness and fear
 The schoolhouse and I
 Hold onto each other
 And hope a small face will peek in
 To see if we are still here
 And grin
 And wave
 And smudge our windows.

— *Richard C. Schultz, Wisconsin*

BOY WITH A DOG

Windy-haired they run together
 into what's left of the day

 unaware
 of a boyhood doomed
 to a shallow grave behind the barn where now

 they run
 windy-haired
 into what's left of their days.

— *Evalyn Rozek, Wisconsin*