



The DIPER



roy parkhurst '22
(after a study by Webster Earl Williams)

THE HUNTED

i have burned the brush
into positionless smoke
we seem to pinwheel away
apart from sky
but within its
every grasp

here on the hard ground
stiff like stone from
winter
i warm my hands
into the fire
of this brush
and watch the cinders
fold up
white

but i add twigs
and broken limbs
until
the sky is lit
a fire
to keep me warm
to feed me
with rabbits

i lean to a tree
one small maple
or locust
or oak
or any tree
small
which might decide
to be generous
and i am stabbing
with a sad knife
at the pieces of a rabbit
and wondering
how it is
we survive
or have to survive
by death

and the rifle glints
the pale stars
looking tiny over trees
or larger through clouds
or moon's quick glances
and i do not know
just what prayer
to speak tonight

the forests
are heavy and quiet
they are dark
and beautiful
and i am alone in the world of hunters
here in the darkest fragment
of night

i assemble
idea and opinion
about these woods
off the coast
of some Georgia
a Southern mystique
penetrates my angle
of thought
we all born of woods
of hunters

we
the hunters' sons
moving gracefully
too cautious
like deer
born into violence
rejecting the heritage
of the Hemingways
wonder how
the rabbit runs
at the scent of powder
and we grow hollow
at the belly
even after a meal
and sit in the stale light
at night
praying

what mystique
comes out of woods
why not
another forest
yet we are doomed
to our Georgia
or our
North Carolinas
or even further
into winter
like the swift deer
straining several miles
the painful muscle
to escape the powder
of myself
miles away
she hears
everything at her tail
and can never know
if she has escaped
again

Roy Parkhurst

FLYING'S COST

by Van Nguyen Riley

Go ahead and drink. It's wine. It doesn't make you drunk. It might make your cheeks pinker, your lips sweet and delicious. We have a long night and you're very beautiful. The night just can't lose the blue color of your eyes, as dear as the ocean. Don't be too gentle! Is that what you said? Okay! What do you want me to do now? Talk about myself? Oh no, the "I" is just meaningless.

But, I'll let you know what happened to me back home. You may not like it, but perhaps that will be better for us, so we won't spend our night looking out the window, watching the fog hang over this San Francisco city.

Coming to I found myself lying on top of a tree in the woods. My lips tasted like salt. I touched my face; a cut on my left cheek, and the blood dripped, mixing with the sweat, running down to my mouth. When I opened my eyes the sunshine blinded me. I raised my hand to pull the hood over my eyes. Such a simple movement hurt badly.

I looked up and saw the sky blue with clouds hanging low. To my left and right I could only see the green color of leaves. Looking down I saw my body lying across two branches. The strings of the parachute hung on the upper branch. Held in that position, I tried to reach a nearby limb. I attempted to stand but collapsed, lost my balance and fell. I heard the sound of breaking branches and ripping cloth. Stars exploded in my eyes and pain suddenly shot through my left leg. I almost passed out.

Fortunately, even though the parachute tore apart the string held me in the air. For a moment the fresh air calmed me and I tried to discern the ground through the thick bushy boughs below. I began to remember what had just happened.

My fellow's airplane got shot by the communist's defense artillery just above the target area, 180 miles southwest of Pleiku, in the central highlands of South Vietnam. From the high altitude I had launched down to cover for my friend. Unfortunately, my airplane was also shot by the enemies. Oil spread all over the windshield and canopy obscuring my vision. I pushed up the throttles then used both hands to pull back the control stick. The nose of the plane slowly rose and I quickly glanced at the instrument panel. R.P.M. dropped, Torque pressure dropped. The oil pressure decreased while the fuel pressure built up. I knew the engine would soon burst into flames and then explode. I climbed to two thousand feet and jettisoned the canopy to get some visibility. The nose caught fire.

The familiar voice of my fellow pilot came through the radio: "Tiger one -- Tiger Two, request leaving airplanes." In a moment I saw the orange and white parachute open in the air. I tried to pilot my aircraft out of the operating zone.

Flames almost licked my face and the engine sputtered and coughed like a fitful old man. Unable to wait any longer, I changed frequency to channel guard, reported my position and before bailing out told "Tiger Three" to head home for the base. Shortly after I bailed out I saw the airplane lost control, plunge toward the ground and explode. My parachute puffed up and stayed afloat in the air like a balloon.

An immense forest was under my feet as I tried to shift the parachute to the right to land on flat ground, but the wind carried me away. I began dropping fast. When I hit the tree I passed out. I don't know how long I was unconscious.

Now, I found myself swinging in the wind. Blood soaked through the left leg of my flying suit and I vaguely feared that it had been broken. Some of the sharp branches had cut my calf and my head spun because of the loss of blood. The tree was quite tall, I could tell as I looked about, and the nearest limb was about nine feet away. Each time the wind blew I wished it would swing me to that safe position. I wanted to grab for the branch but was afraid the strings hooked in the upper branches were not secure. If I fell now, I might die.

The exhaustion and pain made me angry. I had used about five minutes worth of fuel, which would position me about 30 miles from the battle site. Sooner or later the enemies would find me here. I would have to get out of this situation, so I thought and kept still. A moment later I had an idea.

I pulled a long string from out of my parachute pocket and tied one end to my shoulder harness. I also pulled off my boot and tied the other end of the string to it. Aiming carefully, I tossed the boot to the branch. It worked. I was able to pull myself to the limb, grab hold tightly and pull myself up on it. I sat down at last, unlocked the safety latch to release the parachute harness and was free to work on my broken leg. Using a roll of bandages in first aid kit I wrapped the leg with two small branches serving as splints.

The parachute string would help me get down to the ground. First I measured the length of the string by letting it fall free, but it didn't touch the ground. The trunk was also too thick -- two men joining hands could probably make a circle around it -- for me to try climbing down with a wounded leg. I decided to cut off a medium sized branch about 12 inches

see page 2

long and tied it with the string. I hooked it between the V-shape in the branch and tied the other end to my body for safety. I slowly climbed down, stopping for breath each time I came to the end of the string. I used the string and branch to hook on other limbs and continued like this until I reached the ground.

When I finally touched the earth I leaned against the tree and straightened my legs. I breathed like a horse and sweat soaked my body. Sunset shed some last light across the rotten leaves on the ground. My watch said it was six o'clock. I had been shot down at 1:00 PM local time. It had taken about three hours to find the earth.

It was my birthday, I remember thinking. I had taken a little cake to my squadron earlier in the day. I wanted to share the cake my girlfriend had baked me. When I got to the base the Air Tactical Command Center was looking for one more flight for the day. Three stand-by flights had already gone on missions and then formed a flight and had not returned yet. Fifteen minutes after arrival, I had to form a flight, and left the squadron for non-commissioned officer duty. Three of us were airborne immediately. Now I was in the forest enveloped by quiet.

I rechecked my survival kit: a compass, radio, flare gun, medicine, canned saltine crackers, emergency mirror, package of survival cards, plastic water bag, etc. I had everything but two necessary items: water and a map.

Despite hunger and thirst I had to get out to this area as soon as possible. The enemies had been searching for us, of course, since they saw the parachutes. I believed there would be a stream or a river in the area, if my sense of direction was still intact. To get back to the air base I would have to travel north and fly across a river. I would use this river as a check point, 30 miles from the battle. I had flown in on five minutes worth of fuel, or 12 miles. I established a direction using my compass and used a stick for a crutch. I began the trip of adversity, groping in the darkness, stumbling through clumps of trees, thorns cut at my face and tore my flying suit. I fell several times. I was too tired and after a while I stopped.

The sound of an airplane roared distantly above, the sound of a rescue mission sent out to find us. I tried to fire a flare and then another, but, unbelievably, neither would work. I wanted to set the woods on fire but I had no more matches. I was angry and nervous when the airplane disappeared. It was 10:00 pm.

Artillery fired and shells exploded regularly not too far from where I lay. A wild beast yelled and insects talked incessantly with the dark. For the first time I understood what terrible loneliness could be. I remembered my family, and imagined my lover. She was a popular nightclub singer in Saigon. I often saw her there, listened to her sing the beautiful, sad songs. "Where are you now, darling?" I thought. "Do you remember me? Even for just a moment?"

I also remembered my friends' faces. The nicknames we had used like, "Lady Killer," "Milky," "Shorty," "Giant Kid." By now they were probably discussing my fate. Perhaps they would plan more rescue flights. I waited for them, their images whirling in my mind. My throat began to burn, and I fell asleep.

A thunder storm awoke me. A tropical monsoon moved in quickly and I happily turned my face skyward to taste the raindrops. I used my helmet to catch the water and hoped it would stay a long time. Two hours later, though, it stopped, but I now had a full plastic bag of fresh water. The sunrise, another day began.

I ate some crackers and finished off the rest of the water in my helmet. Though the water had helped my thirst it seemed to aggravate the pain in my leg. I felt like a lonely bird without a nest -- wet, soft, weak. I questioned myself about this, and answered, "But you're a young man, be courageous and try hard. You will be saved. Many people are expecting you. Stand up!"

I started on the weary trip again, limping. The injury persecuted my body more than ever, but I was determined to move on. Sometimes I was forced to hop on the right foot to save the other. Morning, noon, afternoon. The day was almost over and I had no idea how far I had traveled or how much further I had to go. I closed my eyes and prayed to the Lord.

Suddenly I was startled by the shot of a rifle. I lay down, put my ear on the ground and picked out the direction of the noise, about 500 yards away. Fearing the enemies would discover me, I hurried to find a thicket. I heard steps momentarily and then saw the Communist soldiers. Unluckily, I had seated myself on a nest of ants and as I waited saw a snake crawl before me. I was shocked and scared. I ground my teeth to sustain myself in this miserable circumstance. The Lord blessed me, though. The Communists left, passed me by. I got up and dusted the ants off my body and then searched for a place to sleep for the night.

During the evening the airplane came back and flew around for a long time. I was still unable to contact it because the radio had broken when I fell down. I brought tiredness into my sleep.

This morning a singing bird awoke me. I filled my stomach with crackers and drank a little water. After picking up some fruit left on the ground by the birds I was ready to go again. But it wasn't easy. I was weak and collapsed many times, falling apart like decaying wood. Why was I so deeply grieved? What was there nobody to follow beside me now? Why was there no one to look after me in the critical condition? I wanted to talk to someone; I expected consolation. There was nothing. I was disappointed and sometimes asked myself "Who do I fight for? For myself? My family? My action? Do I really have a nation so I could offer all of my life to it? Every

day, my friends and I flew above the raggy zones of my country, carrying more bombs and rockets on both wings. These "little toys" were to be dropped right above the heads of my people who had the same skin color, who spoke the same language and carried the same gene as mine. Most of my fellows were killed during the war. Some spent their long months in the hospital; some would never return to the flyin; life because of impaired wounds. Now, would this be where my life terminated? I did not want to know. I did not want an answer to this question.

Communist soldiers killed my fellow pilot. Going through the woods I came across him, his head probably chopped off. I saw his head thrust on a sharp branch with the jockey hat on, his white eyes staring at me. I took his head down, smoothed the eyes and did the blessing for him. I remembered the rifle shots from the day before and the Communist soldiers. I guessed he was probably killed by that group. I put my fellow's head in the survival bag and carried it on my shoulder. I suffered to my limits; nothing left to cry, no tears for this bitter situation. When I could walk no longer, I crawled like a reptile. My leg injury became infected with bacteria and my body temperature rose high. The medicine could not help much.

Finally I found a small stream. The reflection of sunshine on the emergency mirror saved my life. A rescue pilot saw me and a helicopter was sent down about a half hour later. After we're airborn they gave me an orange to help return my strength and then asked, "Do you know about the other fellow?" The orange slipped from my mouth. I burst into tears and cried like I never had before.

The war, the killing, hostility, are all a circle, I thought. I have seen the green leaves change color every season. But the change is too often the same. Is that right, Julie? You were looking sad and tired. Were you a little sleepy? Let me play your favorite song on the record player. The music could help you to a sound sleep. Tomorrow you will return to the hospital. Your beautiful hands will tend human wounds. I will be back to my country and then being sacrificed on the altar politics.

Unsuccessful Search for an Oasis

Make no bones, my friend.
Make no bones about it all.
Do not think yourself unlucky,

Do not think Nature unkind,
rather accept the invitation and couple upon the sand.

None shall know of your submission,
No tearful tales shall be told,
Silence is an ancient virtue
and the Ugly One, he is old.

Softly he soars in circles, moving ever closer,
slowly, expectantly, almost without a sound he buries his
beak within your back, tongue wrapped searchingly around
your spine.

His wrinkled face draws you out with gentle tugging
and his smile reddens as he goes down upon you
once again,
twice again,
serving himself but serving you better.

For what purpose rotting, wrapped in satin, feeding worms,
when dreams of flight are fulfilled after becoming a
breakfast among the deserts heated dunes?
Contained within another's body, your thirst is satiated
and hunger abated, having now fed yourself upon yourself.

And if your face is now withered who is there to see?
Who can say what beauty is among the deserts creatures,
for the sand is no revealing mirror, instead it picks reflections
clean or trapped amid waves of wind crashes upon the desert
shore and erases all images but its own.

And your bones, Oh your bones lie unremembered, glimmering brightly
in the white light of day.
Unremembered, deprived of thought and desire, they do not
exist.
You have made no bones about it. You have made no bones at all.

Later, with your thirsty brothers, you can take tea in the
afternoon when the blood is not so warm.

Thomas M. Abrams

Mississippi River Bridge

Past this bridge the river pours as dark as night,
A tugboat whistles and is gone. . .

It said you had a quarrel with your lady and sought to end it all
Releasing fear and lonely rage in the time it took to fall.
The tensions of the distant lights confused upon the sky,
The silent tide below you - how easy you could die.
With just a splash, without a sound, you'd leave this world, denied,
Submit your name to papers as one unsatisfied.

Stranger, you are not the only one
To climb this bridge and hear the chill of wind -
Tell me what moves under lambent reflections,
Tell me what does the river carry away
And why must the lovers watch?

At this unguarded rail I stand
And stare at ageless strands of steel
That do not waver in the current.
Past the raven schemes of men
This black flood rushes on
Stronger than all words or lives.
Past the brazen heat of lights
I strain to hear the play
Of waves that lash at steel
Asking what good voices are,
Waiting on a stubborn heart
To call me back to home.

*Chip Loughlin**Morning Light*

There is no fury now -
The early mist still polishes the surface of this town.
The factory row sits mute
With stone and brick and broken glass like relics,
Outworn horrors of an outworn past.
Below, the river wobbles, careless on its way,
The current can't be driven
It's just deciding not to stay.
And from this bridge the colored rooftops
Shut confusion safely in,
If time was meant to be like this
You wonder what good living would have been.
This must be what was meant
When talk of starting over was begun,
These surfaces of silence
As if the past was washed and done.

*Chip Loughlin**beauty from the unbeautiful*

hands calloused and chalk-dry
clutch each crack and crevice
of the glaring, scorched-white sidewalk

inches of hide layer upon the
ever-bended knees
now bent for time unmarked by memory

strong, steady hands
rippled with veins stretched upon muscle
strain to drag the weighty hulk

the once bleak, white cement
is now made beautiful with the chalk -
colorful chalk drawings of breathless scenes

hands, bronzed under the baking sun
hold the chalk with surgical stead
making each mark with unhurried patience

grotesquely twisted body
humped over for hours unnoticed
to achieve one goal. . . to make beauty from the unbeautiful

*Joanie V. Brigham**Pilgrimage*

Down in New Orleans
The sun explores the blemished sidewalks.
We move like pilgrims
Across the streets, the parks, the pavement, into homes,
Out again, through court yards, converging at corners,
And separating again.
Momentarily grouping ourselves in ill-defined circles -
Center the street minstrel
And panting again.
Our progress undetermined
But singular in its aimlessness.

Bourbon Street is a peculiar humanity
Diverse in its unanimity.
The darkness mingles trumpet into viola -
Intersecting melodies, meditative haplessness.
In and out the cross stitch pattern of ourselves
The pilgrims.
We meet and pass without apology
The whores alike the busy eyed tourist alike
The Junior League alike
The old black buggy man shaking his bell:
"Who be goin? Two mi on th' kwater."
Entrance and exit out again and passing.
Here -- alone on Bourbon Street.

There is a godless silence about the river,
Stretched out for display against the flaked wharf.
Set on the bank, bleachers support solemn spectators.
Lines and lines on the shore
Staring out -- staring out at the modest river.
Staring closely -- avoiding his genius
Staring blankly at the godless river.
Yet the current persists, still in appearance only.
Interrupted at some new obstacle
Perhaps dividing at points
But always blending again,
Renewing his singular progress.
On in undiscernable motion
Here, and before
Here, and after
New Orleans.

*Mary Anna Turner**For Elizabeth Sewell*

Blinding; the maddened rush--
Incommensurable with all of space
All of time, all that is.
I stand at the edge at the window
Peering into the soul, or mine.
Yes, mine--but that I cannot touch,
All feeling lost.
Darkness now, relieve me--
Cool, rushing, wetting,
Darkness is comfort, peace.
Split not the night
O sacred moon;
Beguiler, temptress,
My body bends and flows
With all the terrible of tides.
Your screaming violent woman
Cackles at the gates of hell
And I, my bow in hand
And eye upon the mark,
Draw forth her devil's blood
To pool and dry upon her feet.
"Death to the wicked," shout the men,
Their very cry will bring relief!
But oh, how little did we ever know
The rushing waves come forth, retreat
The maddening surf, the pounding soul.

*Jim Hood**"ONLY A MADONNA IN A FIVE AND DIME"*

Only a madonna in a five and dime,
Empty hands with plenty of time.

Steven Hirsch

Hitchhikers

Travellin the back road of Virginia,
Toward the Capital city of this nation
Two important people drift in our path.

An elderly man with a crooked mouth
Calls himself Hart.
His thumb in the wind
In attempt to head home again.
A brown grocery bag is folded
Around his hand.

The music from the tape deck fades
I tune into what the old man has to say.
Stretching my ears into the backseat
I'm going down a strange road
With this man named Hart.

Paralyzed on the left side,
From a war, farm work, travels,
I may never know.
The stories are long
Translation is quite difficult
Into such young ears.
Apples at three cents a bushel
And a barn full of hay
Filled faster and neater
Than any damn nigger.
Images flash in Hart's head
Like the autos I speed by.

Old Grey Eyes
I name him Brown.
He offers only a shot of gin
Followed by a capful of vodka.
These spirits go down hard,
Punching at the sides of my starving belly
Yet brings satisfaction to the lips of our traveller.

I break a smile, too
As he cannot believe that I eat yams raw.
His eyes are tarnished
Gazing out the dusty window
This crossroad is his stop
He nods, leaving with a friendly handshake.
In a brown suit, with brown shoes
The old man Brown shuffles toward a tractor trailer home.

Minutes later tractor trailer homes
Turn into fifty foot earth bending bulldozers
And ten ton dump trucks.
Carrying away the graves of famous Virginians.
The whole scene
Resembles the vicious monsters
That devastated the earth eons ago,
Raping precious possessions
With endless, unforgiving greed.

Brown and Hart worry only about this day.
For the past is far too battering
Like walking out of a saloon
Eyes black and blue
Stumbling down the rainy, misty road
Between the empty glasses
And the shack they call home.
Awaiting the security
Found beneath the warm blankets.

Richard Fulton

idly changing shapes
my mind rotates around you
clinging
as if the wind blowing
throws me against your skin
... or is it you bringing my leaf-body
closer---
arms reaching out for me

Marsha Halper

By the River

Autumn is echoes of leaves trodden underfoot:

Down by the river
I met Uncle John
where sycamores speckled the sun.
"Oh kid it's nice to see ya,
How have ya been?
You like my little spot here do ya?
Well, the riverbank was lonely
But the street was all confused.
This seemed to fit the best.
Besides, the sun can warm me here,
I like it on my back.
Oh you look so good kid.
How's the world been treating ya?
I come here to the corner

To pass away the time
But I've seen ways that's worse.
It's quite a feat, you know,
To sit here on this bench
And watch the things that pass.
I can't remember half,
And don't know what to make of all the rest,
And still I find I'm here.
How fine you look now kid.
A man away from home
With still some time to visit.
Take care kid.
My God, you look so good."

I heard Uncle John loved a girl once
But everything turned bad.
Not all the love he had
Could keep that girl alive.
I had to hear it though,
Uncle John would never tell.
Autumn is echoes of leaves.

Chip Loughlin

Bedded like spring
we lie exposed
hairy limbs and white bellies
you draw warm into yourself
poised like a palace guard
unmoved and confident
muscles firm.
Our words pass away in
sound falling
through cracks in the floor
like ideas and
useless sperm
from past encounters.
We lie devoid
until your round of duty is complete.
Time. You turn out of bed
and dress in regimental order
briefs, shirt, socks, jeans
the grinding of your zipper
shreds my nerves
into confetti
fine and multicolored
ambitions fall as
the moon with
morning

Ellen Boule'

my eyes want sleep from crying,

my eyes want sleep from crying,
body tense - needs to be held.
Waiting for comfort,
feeling a little too vulnerable to seek it
myself.

inward cringe of feeling this way-
facing an uncomfortable situation,
being in the midst of it.
The kind of sad discomfort that
i know
if I were a kid I'd go to sleep,
and upon waking in the morning
it would be all gone.
How sleep fixed it I don't know.
I don't know.
but I do know that sometimes
I wish these feelings
would take the back burner,
and they would boil away

Marsha Halper

from: "Hippocrene From The Moon-Hoof; Tracing The Wing #II"

retire me to your dream,
 branched with coiled vines
 outside against the trellised rose.
 at night when moths
 with splintered shadow
 halt like cinders against the petals
 drawn to the nectar,
 pollen rolls unnoticed among their feet.
 hushed they drift from the flower
 to the candle in the window
 and burn themselves away
 with their persistent wings,
 these, dust-delicate and dappled
 with muted color, hidden.
 at night in the flame
 they flash up smouldering ash.
 no one knows that this
 is their sacrificial rite.
 each spring a moth must burn,
 scattering its fertile ashes;
 rituals must be observed.
 roses acknowledge that you sleep
 through the rush of death.
 for many, one night is all
 of the dream they can afford.
 at night, when i see moths
 careening with fire,
 i shut my eyes and
 disappear.
 outside the window
 small eyes watch a lifetime's single dream
 dancing in the darkness,
 dancing with agony.
 i, asleep in the tombs of their eyes
 with the dream of unfolding wings.

Roy Parkhurst

Valley Night

The winter night comes like that,
 Cold and sinking down the valley
 The long and voiceless darker time,
 As if the disappearance of the sun
 Was all the sky had needed
 To hang its silence closely in.
 Too late to close the curtains now,
 The penetration of the dark
 Had filled the room
 And set to quiet noise
 The agitations of his doubt.
 Another peaceful night of stars.

It hurt the most
 To watch the candle flicker on the wall -
 A flame surrounded by the night
 Defying what it could not stop.
 He knew he had the night
 But had the isolation pinched the burning out?
 The doubt and all the searching
 That never seemed to cease,
 And never a response
 To justify concern;
 He only knew for sure
 That all was unconfirmed.

And yet the folly of the searching
 The hope of foolish vision
 Was all that ever mattered
 Was all that made him human,
 His heart was all his worth.
 And even that intensity
 Could never seem to last
 But fade away from time to time
 As if his firm commitment
 Was nothing more than childhood's careless play.

Chip Loughlin

Quaaripartite
 "Teach us to care and not to care
 Teach us to sit still"
 T.S. Eliot

I.
 The silence does not open
 As morning crosses into day,
 And cups stemming from blackness
 Meet at the time clock.

The silence does not open.
 It spins in solitude around me
 As a spider dresses silk around her food.

II

Idlely I walk the field where I once
 knew you.

A voice says my name;
 A hand pats the ground,
 But it is not you.
 I smile and mutter superficials.
 Raising an open hand,
 I watch the sun break in my fingers.
 Resisting throw backs on other days
 I have touched on different faces
 But found that they
 Are just the no's of you.

Canadian Geese

The sun is misconstrued in rising--
 The cover clouds of grey and white and grey
 Background to the delicate,
 The harmony of wings and wind
 Chorusing over fields of harvest gold,
 Rising past the yellowing of trees.
 In this raising of the season--
 Inside a certain discontent
 With burdenings of explanation.
 Retreat, retreat to rediscover,
 To hidden ponds and silent waterways
 Where leaves are leaves alone
 And infinitely more.
 Description is not mere repeat;
 Too much is clothed in what we see
 For our abandonment of living verse.
 Geese and wings and harvest time, □
 Poet paint and poet sing;
 Touching of the moment's scene
 Is miracle enough.

Jim Hood

III

I did not stop
 On the road bent of shadowed
 gravel.
 I looked through tinted
 window
 My eyes wanting but not resting
 On grey-board gas stations
 (Red circles "Drink Coca Cola"),
 On homes built firm-footed white
 Above untended valley.

I did not pause
 though the sun
 Shed red onto slow-sided mountains.
 The subtle question of the land
 I answered.
 I did not.
 Was it the dust
 Come life behind my wheels
 That pursued me?

IV

And I may still deny
 Your presence enduring.

Mary Anna Turner

In the stormy nights of one's soul, there is a distinct pleasure
Taken at framing the sounds of the thunder and lightning in
one's own words.

The syllables thus formed become the fitful tracing of a melodic
Line, each note sounding against all the vast and dissonant
harmonies of the sky, that

Shadowlike, betoken the arrival of destiny at a single point in
time.

"Here, here!" is my desperate cry as the wind tears like nothing
through
The twisted arms of the trees, thrust in cold spasms toward the
indifferent sun.

Here, here are my hands. Here are my fingers, curved slightly
forward.
Toward the palms. Beyond me the intense passion of the sky rages;

It is strangely disproportionate to the calm vigor of my eyes,
Ravaged by the jagged flashes of wrathful lightning, stung by
the hard rain.

With unchecked insistence the rain pours steadily down: down
into my dripping hair,
Down into my cupped hand, falling to plash in the mud at my feet.

The rain strikes the bare, shadowless earth. (Why, I wonder, in
dreams
Do we have no shadows?) I stare at the muddy ground beneath my
feet,

I hear the singing of the rain clearly beneath the raging of the
thunder.

"When the clouds part," I think, "the sun will return and I shall
cast my shadow:

Here, on this wet dirt--then, at the end of the storm. I do not
have enough resolve now,
Enough resolution or whatever is required to cast a shadow."

Watching the grey sky through the barren branches of the trees,
I silently listen to the melody of the rain: falling, falling,
falling here--

On this shadowless earth.

The storm shifts, the trees creak. Dropping my eyes from the sky,
I notice a figure approaching through the rain. We come to stand

Together, silently, he and I, watching the progress of the storm.
After awhile, stooping, he gathers a wet handful of fallen leaves.

The air around us is filled with flying leaves, tossed wildly by
the winds of the storm.

"Here," he says, "Here, within my hands, is all the season which
men call Autumn."

"There is no man," I replay, "who, filling his hands with the leaves
of passing fall, can
Say, 'Here among my fingers is all the wonder of autumn,' while
all about him,

As about us, the burning leaves pitch and roll as they are flung
from the trees."
Nevertheless, in the silence that follows, I stare at the fire

Between his hands, watching its vague glimmer reflect the glimmer
of his eye.

"Here," he points, "here within this eye is all the fire of the sun.

There, beyond us, approaching the horizon, is not the sun, but
only the

Reflection of my eye. . . ."
Can this be so? I ask myself, wondering.

Can it be that the sun, in its daily swinging from horizon to
horizon, contains
In fragment a light identical to that which glimmers here, in
this stranger's eye?

I feel a vague threat of fear, and hesitate before asking, "Do
you
Then hold within your hand all the darkness of an unborn star?"
Silence.

The rain. The wind. Lightning and thunder. I am trembling.
"Here."

I cannot look.
"Here, within this eye, is all the desert
of night's empty sky. . . ."

At this I turn and run, fleeing the depths of this other, unblinking
eye.
My hands shake, my eyes are wet. "Where," I demand, "from
whom

Has he claimed this right?" I run on. Overhead the sky lurches.
Thunder.
Rain. I stop and fall, panting, on the wet leaf-covered ground.

I roll to my back and stare at the trembling sky. Once, only
once,
And after that twice, man dreams of himself; but dreaming comes
from sleep,

And sleep from darkness. When man wakes. . . .
I stand, watching
the last drops of rain.

I listen to the sound of the rain, beginning to understand, but
still

I am not resolved. I see the world rotate around me, I feel the
glimmer
In my eye, but still I stand: irresolute, watching the falling
rain.

Bill Meikrantz

for Albert Giraud

now,

for the dusk has folded

the halves of the world in two.

follow me through the night's moons,
where stars burn in the sea.

Pierrot plucks one up, scooping water
into his hands where a star is kept,
and he stares half dark

into the mind's silence,
all against a groaning sea.

and he holds a star

to his smouldering eye,

then drifts on the tide, far away.

i have followed you through

the sky's only trace of the night,

then lost it where it lies,

half light.

this is the time to gather stars,

now,

for the dusk has folded

the halves of the world in two.

Roy Parkhurst

THE PASSAGE

by James Stephens

Dick Taylor's wife's face was drawn and pale; the sweat ran off her forehead in long sluggish streams. Braced against the corner of the seat and the door, she watched her husband with a look on her face and in her pale green eyes of resignation as if trying to comprehend something that she or anybody else could never hope to understand. "Do you realize how hard this trip is on Beth Lyn?" Let me wipe your face." Dick Taylor kept his eyes on the road, seemingly unaware of his wife kneeling in the seat next to him. At last turning to speak and seeing her bent over in such a way as to distract him from his original intent, he was suddenly taken by a ludicrous notion; the type of flash that in the midst of all seriousness seizes the mind flooding it with the absurd. He was no longer aware of his original intent so much as he was taken by the sudden thought that the freckles on her face looked like mud that is splashed up about the foundations of houses. Turning away from Beth Lyn, Dick Taylor's Wife met his bemused gaze and was held by it. But the spell, which like the ranting evangelist's hold on his congregation is partly terror at the awful truth in the eyes of one who sees through the mundane and partly fascination with the outward change in the familiar face's countenance, was broken by the tug of the gravel shoulder as the car veered off the pavement, sending up a raucous of chat clattering against steel. Regaining her place on the seat Dick Taylor's Wife turned her body sideways to look out the window at the hazy yellow sky; her back to her husband and his attempts at getting the stopped car back into the lane of traffic.

The road wound heavily trafficked through the shadeless land, past the profession of worn out tobacco farms and the fields of listless burnt corn that covered the valleys and ran up the sides of the scrub pine-topped knobs. Cars with out-of-state license plates shot past them heading north with their windows rolled tight up, but Dick Taylor watched the road ahead impervious to the stares from within them directed at the wobbly-wheeled car with the strange looking dog in the back seat. Nothing was going south. It looked as though all were leaving, flowing north; all except the creek beds, dried by the summer sun. Winding through the hills down to the languid brown waters of the Tennessee flowing south into the heat.

Dick Taylor's Wife had fallen asleep again; lulled by the old Dodge's knocking pistons and rattling rusty body. Once white, the car had only retained a semblance of the old paint as an old woman, harried by the years, wears a locket from her youth. It now sported a green rear fender salvaged from a scrap yard which replaced the original torn off years before in a grocery store parking lot. The rest of the car was splotted by brown rust paint and the spreading rust that ever diminished the faded white. Periodically the engine overheated, and once while she was asleep Dick Taylor poured the contents of her thermos jug into the radiator. Owing to the distance of the journey and the already overstrained state of the car he kept its speed down, much to the consternation of the cars that lined up behind them on the hills and crooked sections of the road and roared around them with their wheels skirting the other side of the pavement and the thin line of back road providence when a glimpse of open road was allowed them.

She slept not as travelers often do, napping from time to time to ease the monotony of the trip, but as one whose day operated on four and not twenty-four hours. She would awaken from sleeping several hours, often remaining in a sleep intoxicated trance for a half hour or more. But all at once she would come to with a start -- seemingly aware of her environs or anything of the like for the first time. Anxiously she would question Dick Taylor as if to ascertain fears of being physically transformed while in her sleep; transported to a realm where all the old realities faded. Awakened, as it were, from his reverie with the road, Dick Taylor would respond to her queries with obstinance at having to go over the same grounds with her as he had a hundred and fifty or so miles back. She would muse on all that he supplied her with and then after would make attempts to relate her musings to him, to which more often than not he replied with apparent thoughtful yet detached nods of his heads; frowning his brow and moving his whole head and shoulders back and forth, his eyes on the road. Apparently satisfied with the import he seemed to receive from her polemics, she would turn to Beth Lyn sprawled on the hole-pocked back seat where the yellowed stuffings protruded in ever rising puffballs. The dog rarely slept, if ever, as if her master vicariously bore that burden for her; but lay with her pointed head between her paws, her cow-like eyes upgazed at the blurred procession of tree tops and hazy sky visible just above the door. After fooling with Beth Lyn, with repeated attempts to comfort her on the spring-lumped seat, Dick Taylor's Wife would return to the corner of the front seat, intent on the passing scene, and make comments on any and all things that passed through her mind, as if grasping for HER moment before inevitably falling asleep again.

And so it was, the nephew of the last Taylor brother left in Kentucky still above ground returning after twenty-five years a stranger to the land with his wife and her dog, who were always and forever more strangers to that place. Dick Taylor's Wife had been right. He had not known this man: his father's very own brother; had met him only once at the burial of the man that linked their blood, and now both were dead and he was in a car -- a car that shouldn't even have been on the road, driving across not one but two states for this man's burial. Death. Death. Over and over. Around and around it went in him. He was alive and acting solely on it. Death. And the car moved on northward through the bleached land under the yellow sky: bright but without a sun.

What was in his mind, on account of some phone call he had gotten at work, to come home, and in the middle of the week, and to announce of all things that THEY were going to drive that superannuated Dodge, God only knows how far, and to leave Beth Lyn with almost total strangers, to travel in this heat and stay with people who were hardly any better than that, was incomprehensible to Dick Taylor's Wife. Knowing that it was not articulate in his mind why he should leave his steady paying job in the middle of the week to go to a place in which he had no ties with the people and even less with the land except his kindred that were buried in it (mostly before he was even born) didn't help her either. But they were on the road and had been moving for hours -- since way before the dawn, though even then the heat had been with them. And now the land was rising to the east as the road ran straight through the hill country. The steam of cars passed farm after farm where the cows stood motionless as the billboards in the fields that they shared.

Dick Taylor pulled into a gas station in a small town just south of the Tennessee River bridge. Stiffly climbing out of the car he strolled over to the front window of the station where a greasy folded map was taped to the inside, while a young boy with stooped shoulders walked around the car searching for the gas tank while he tugged the pump's hose behind him, straining at its attempts to pull him back to the pump. Dick Taylor's Wife went around behind the station with the restroom's key on the end of a smooth worn wooden stick. Beth Lyn squatted in the parking lot.

Standing peeling the wet shirt off his back, Dick Taylor studied the map with interest. A hundred, maybe a hundred and fifty miles to the Kentucky border. For twenty-five years it was that name that made him turn his head to the source of that word when ever he heard it . . . Kentucky . . . Almost a hundred and fifty miles to that incorporeal border and the land he knew last as a boy of ten, but still somehow knowing it better than the city in Alabama he had lived in for twenty-five years. Twenty-five years since that rainy winter morning, several lives ago it seemed, when he had been sent to live with his dead mother's sister; sent even before the steady winter rains could erase the shovel scores on his father's grave.

Dick Taylor's Wife returned from the side of the building, dropping the key in his hand as though it were a letter and he a mail slot, and walked towards the water fountain inside the garage. She dampened one of the paper towels that she always carried in her purse and stood rubbing her neck and shoulders abjectly looking at the ground. Then suddenly she swung around as if suddenly cognizant of a spectre floating beneath the grease rack. Being taken by its sudden appearance, she paused a moment before confronting it.

H.D. Honey was the owner of the station and was the man whom she beheld working beneath a car elevated upon the hydraulic grease rack. Just as his surname, what ever it might have been, had surrendered to the brevity that the oval name tag on his breast pocket required, so had H.D. Honey surrendered his identity to the gas station. The years working with cars in the gloomy station on the corner of this small town had penetrated him so completely, forcing out long ago the spirit of this soul, replacing it with grease and road dirt that seemed to exude from his skin and blue work clothes much like honey from the wax interiors of bee gum. The stale smell of sweat-mixed tobacco and sour coffee hung over him like the irrevocable smell of urine in the bathrooms and the muskiness of the cluttered office off the garage that seemed to seep from the dark, paint-flecked walls of the station. Of this knarled featureless figure with clothes hanging from its boney limbs, the head was the most prominent. The rest of the body was only discernable where it angularly protruded through the grimy folds of his uniform. The head was strikingly pointed, going back through his salt and pepper colored greased hair to a cowlick that continually pointed behind him like a bluejay's crest, and forward across his narrow ribbed forehead to the extremities of his nose which defied anything like dust or sweat to alight on its due to its steep sides and sharp ridge line. The closeness of his two dark eyes deep-set in his skull combined with a small perpetually pursed mouth seemed to suggest that his features, once full and spread had withered up and pulled close together. The total effect of this concentration of organs was that H.D. Honey seemingly no longer used his senses separately, but relied on the inner force from whence the grease and indomitable scowl originated.

Having studied the man for some time as he worked on the car, she over came her initial shock and approached, stooping as she walked under the car even though it cleared her head by a good two feet. "Excuse me," she said in a voice used to awake a sleeper known to have sudden, violent awakenings, "Could you tell me where we are?" H.D. Honey looked at Dick Taylor's Wife, his eyes going over her like two ants, and then to the anachronous Dodge parked by the pumps where Beth Lyn was drinking grey water out of a pothole. His attention returned to the inner workings of the car which his arms disappeared into. "Lady. I'd just like to know one thing and that's how in the hell you got here if you don't know where you are?" Unfaltering by this coarseness, she replied as if explaining something of great complexity to a child, "You see, my husband, he's around in the bathroom, wants to go to Kentucky to visit his uncle. But he's dead. The uncle is dead I mean. All I know is that we've come a long ways since Alabama and I'm not sure where," she paused and with thoughtful emphasis, "EXACTLY we are now. You see I sleep alot because I get car-sick sometimes and it's just easier to sleep. My husband won't tell me any more where we are. He's not mean or anything, but do you think that because I can't stay awake, sparing him the worry of me gettin' sick, that it's fair not to tell me where I am?" Apparently not listening to her train of thought which he signified with the buzz of his ratchet wrench. "Well?" she demanded after this had ceased. "Lady," he conceded, directing his voice into the automotive firmament above his head, "Ain't no man ever said H.D. Honey ever messed with what w'ant his own. An I'm here saying

DUCK HUNTING WITH GRANDFATHER for Marvin Bell

5:35 I. AGITATION.

the sun
 clutters the forest
 with light,
 the branches seem to weave
 great chaotic brambles
 to the eye
 that leave me spinning
 at their touch.
 a charred leaf
 brushes my face, a shoulder,
 i jerk around,
 no insect or snake,
 another leaf, i clamber and
 stop.

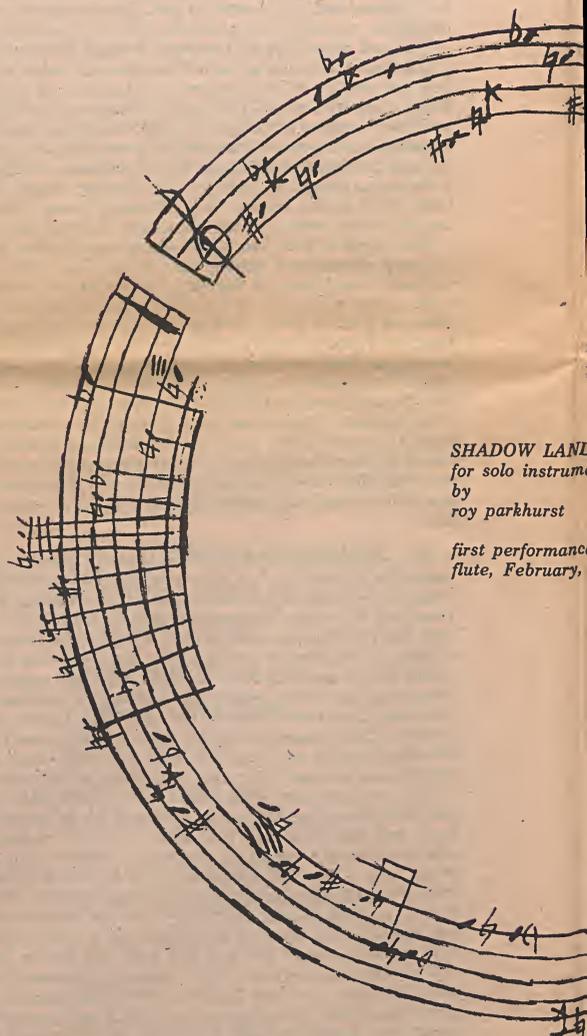
5:51 II. PATIENCE.

daybreaking,
 a place i disappear into
 to hide within the
 night-cooled air, to breathe
 the crisp, the fresh air,
 to forget the summer heat
 which creeps in by
 mid-morning, almost steaming.
 instead i slip
 through a geometry of boughs
 listening, smelling water,
 feeling mosquitos, and knowing
 that it is close.
 i walk.

6:11 III. FOWL.

on the pond
 ducks swim,
 calmly, nearly without moving,
 a series of vague ripples
 in their wake,
 imperceptible lines
 as thin as death itself,
 but i cannot really see them.
 when i emerge onto the bank
 they rush away through water
 drifting helplessly.

but what acquaintances
 do not drift away,
 grandpa dead, and it seems
 i do not tread quietly enough,
 perhaps i have come back
 to a place where
 i am not welcome.

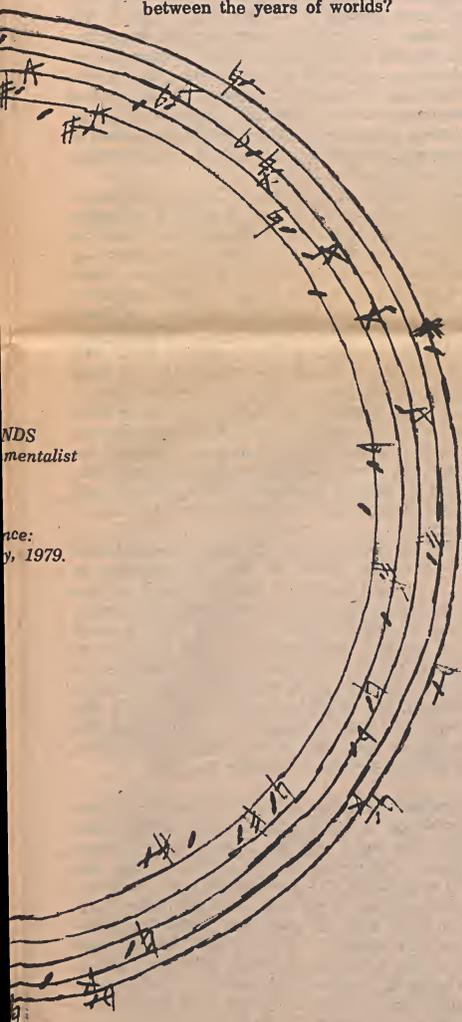


SHADOW LANE
 for solo instrument
 by
 roy parkhurst

first performance
 flute, February,

6:42 IV CONTEMPLATION.

perhaps some things
 are better left
 to the memory.
 we reinact our lives,
 so awkward,
 that inspired grace, gone.
 and when i see you there is that
 rush of emotion in the recognition,
 but it is suddenly only a shadow,
 and we fall silent in the midst of a greeting.
 what is there to say
 that could actually hope to link us
 between the years of worlds?



NDS
 mentalist

nce:
 y, 1979.

7:00 V. RETURN.

all that i know
 is beneath a pond,
 and i bob
 between every life,
 the people either follow or recoil.

and i have been curling
 into a foetal crouch
 to escape the heat
 of summer,
 to linger in the pond
 all cool and glassy,
 but all moves toward land,
 there is just no route
 that has been cleared,
 every path i take,
 choking with brambles.

i need some sleep,
 the sun rises
 much too early in the summer,
 but the trees are in a mist
 and the air so exact.
 this world i love,
 beyond all worlds, even beyond memory
 or ancestral presence.

i watch the pond
 one last moment,
 and the ducks float
 from bank to bank,
 out of range.

Roy Parkhurst

from page 7

to you that the time you start messin' with what ain't yer own, that's when yer gonna lose all you got. Who's got a thing comin' to 'em any more?" Struck by the profundity of his words as if they emanated from his mouth independent of the rest of him, he withdrew his hands from his work and looked down at the ground.

Unsatisfied with his reply and feeling a sickness coming on from the heavy, grease and gasoline laden air, Dick Taylor's Wife returned to the water fountain and fumbled through her purse for her pills. Beth Lyn had since wandered into the garage and was roaming around the piles of trash scattered about the floor unnoticed by H.D. Honey. Finding nothing of interest, in the greasy rags, worn auto parts and empty soft drink bottles, she wandered over to where H.D. Honey was standing and thrust her wet nose into the flat seat of his pants. He turned and swung with remarkable deftness at Beth Lyn, who had sensed something in his demeanor unworthy of further investigation and retreated out of the path of his boot. He was at once incensed by the intrusion upon his thoughts; his person; his very world, and turned on Dick Taylor's Wife, who was standing over the stream of water issued by the machine with her head back, innocent of it all.

Dick Taylor entered the garage looking at first at Beth Lyn slinking out with her tail between her legs and then following that line back to H.D. Honey who had since returned to staring at the retreating path of his persecutor with fire in his anemic eyes. Dick Taylor called to his wife, who was now watching the wall in front of the fountain as if the path of the injected pills was transfigured onto the cinder blocks for her perusal, indicating that she should follow him back to the car. H.D. Honey looked up at Dick Taylor, seeing him for the first time; eyeing him contemptuously as if he was a remanifestation of the dog. Before they left the garage he had returned to his work. Dick Taylor and his wife returned to the car and they held the front seat up while Beth Lyn came across the parking lot and climbed into the back seat like some sullen debutante.

Just past the last store in town stretched the bridge over the Tennessee River -- a lane and three quarters of steel and pavement surrounded by space and far below the river. The traffic slowed to a crawl, inching along high above the brown imperceptively moving waters. One could not imagine they held any more life or direction than the parched fields and tinder-dry woods that ran down to its edges and seemed to rise out of it on the other side, pinned motionless by this grand snake that curved out of sight in either direction. Restless from the sudden disappearance of landscape, Beth Lyn paced in the back seat. Dick Taylor's Wife shut her eyes. They had not taken food since their pre-dawn Alabama kitchen, but the heat that had followed them out of the steel towns had worked in their stomachs and stayed hunger.

They passed towns more frequently as they continued north, but they were most often gas stations and a few stores where the highway had pushed through and had replaced the people with gasgroceriesbeericeandpicnicsupplies. Most of the stores advertised themselves every mile or so with billboards that clumped closer and closer as one neared the store. "Three More Miles To Lazy Sam's Fireworks and Novelties", and "Two More Miles to Real Wooden Bowls and Beach Towels", it's "Cornbread and Homecooked Beans at Lazy Sam's Trading Post". And then there would be the store in the center of a three acre limestone gravel parking lot with a plywood false storefront twice as high and half again as long as the actual building -- from the front looking impressive and from the side like a large house trailer stuck on an immense sheet of fly paper. In the parking lots would be the big cars with out-of-state license plates that had rushed by them and that would soon enough overtake them on down the road. Nothing stirred away from the highway except the tall johnson grass and the purple Joe Pie weed that waved in the continual rush of slipstream and exhaust.

As the sun climaxed in the afternoon sky the narrow two-lane road turned into four lanes of heavily trafficked highway. They passed residential sections and the barbecue stands and Freezettes that formed an almost continual strip of parking lot along side the road and cluttered the horizon with their great wood and glass signs. Traffic lights reduced the previously uninterrupted travel to stop and go. At one of these lights Dick Taylor frantically pumped the car's flacid brake pedal to bring them to a stop almost clearly in the middle of the intersection. Sliding down into the seat, Dick Taylor's Wife awoke with her face pressed against the window and was immediately entranced by the sight of the swimming pool of the "Late Riser Motor Lodge", where two young boys wearing cut-off denim pants were chasing a small sodden cat around the fenced enclosure, while a shiny brown fat man in knee-length shorts reclined behind his folded newspaper. Her head slid back further as the car started back up. Gradually she lost sight of the motel, but continued her backward gaze as they passed the quick fry palaces, gas stations, and taverns with their littered parking lots where the inevitable two or three cars that weren't driven away the night before sat desolate amid the beer cans that described arcs on the pavement in the hot summer wind.

Ahead of them the blue sky-line of the city danced in the heat waves off the road. Beth Lyn paced from window to window, throwing her dripping mouth and pink swollen tongue to the hot waft of air that stirred between stops and seemed to swell in intensity as they waited at the lights. Dick Taylor at last broke the stillness of the car as Beth Lyn placed her head on his shoulder dribbling saliva down his shirt front. "Jesus Christ! Get this dog out of my ear! How am I supposed to see traffic with her in my way? I can't even see out the back". Beth Lyn moved back, watching him with a somewhat reserved sideward glance as though understanding the sentence but waiting for the last minute stay of execution. Dick Taylor's Wife turned and looked right into Dick Taylor's eyes, meeting the frazzled, heat irritated look in them with her somnolent stare. Their contact being broken by the traffic, Dick Taylor's Wife put her arm about Beth Lyn's neck and comforted her with soft words linked by faint cooing and clucking noises.

"Aughhh. . . poor thing. Ummmmghh. Soo, soo so hot. Unnghhh...There there now, don't bother Daddy, he's busy driving. Let me get you some water."

It went off inside his head again, but now with more pain than ever before. He had long since resolutely resigned the notion of having children, but despite this always he was confronted with anger upon the recollection of this. It was as if there was an animal lying in wait in the darkness of this realm of thought that he must deal with every time he passed through it. But now, after so long a stranger to that region, SHE had set this creature of the dark on his track and had added another dimension to this terrible with the thought that the moon-eyed dog between them on the seat had assumed the place of his own seed and was to be his sole progeny. And now he, as blind Isaac of old, trembled; taken in by the absurd. Dick Taylor's Wife questioned him about the empty thermos jug, which seemed to grant him some satisfaction, but he said nothing. From the back seat now, Beth Lyn watched them exchange glares.

And then the city was behind. Turning off the main road in the sweltering East Tennessee town, they seemed to have left the heat as well as the cars behind. He was alone again. The heat had subsided and Dick Taylor's Wife had dozed off. Beth Lyn lay lifeless on the seat, no longer watching the cavalcade of desiccated hackberry trees and blanched sky, but with detached looks watched the hole in the floorboard where a dried oak leaf nervously rattled in the upsurging air. The roads were no longer seeded with the tourist traps and they passed through actual towns where life was carried on and not merely serviced and refueled to move on to another place. There were people in the fields working and in between the fields and pastures there were sections of woods. Thin though they were, they were no more of the sappy pines planted by the big paper mills or the conical cedars that swallow whole pastures with their rampant fecundity. The trees grew large there in the gently rolling hills behind the farm houses and in the rocky sections of lanc, or protected from the plow, followed the windings of the creeks which defied the surveyor's square. Great oaks and the shaggy barked hickories formed walls periodically which the highway passed between. The light green of a willow whose roots were anchored in some unseeable water seemed almost to blaze out against the deep verdure of the hills and the tainted yellow of the fields.

Alone; there were no more reminders of Dick Taylor. They were asleep or several hundred miles back. Now, the road, the car, and vague memories were all that possessed him. For the first time in twenty-some years he could go beyond that rainy morning in February at the bus stop, standing beside that big red cardboard suitcase with his first ten years inside. It had all been blotted out by the mill town and the long Alabama summers, where, as a boy yet in high school, he had joined the men with red faces who worked in the white heat; all lost in the streams of smoking liquid iron. Finally out of the flatland heat he discovered that it was all there, had always been there: his father alive and arising in the sunless dawn, leaving early from that womanless house for the sawmill; he and his brother walking to school on those frosted paths that he had once known so well, their breaths rising white and forming one; his aunt that came during the day and cooked and kept their house; then that February morning and the heart that palpitated with pulse like pure life that never more sounded, which by that very act brought the distant family from Ohio, Indiana, and Tennessee in their best clothes; and then it was he alone on a bus south, going south in the winter rain.

Dick Taylor reached into the glove box for the cigarettes which he kept there and smoked. It was by now late afternoon. The air that came in through the vent, swirling the torpid blue smoke and drawing it out the window, was cool now. Among the rising hills the road was nearly always shaded. The heat that had been with them all day had lifted. Instead of the harsh indistinct forms of the parched countryside, the cool shadows of afternoon seemed to add form and depth to the steep hillsides. The land no longer faded into the summer blue-white haze, continuing as field after field, farm after farm, small town after small town until swallowed by the sky. Here light passed through the trees making the green canopy the immediate sky, and the absence of light back in the ridges and hollows where the trees and laurel thickets became too dense was the horizon.

Somewhere they had crossed into Kentucky because he remembered the river that he was now driving beside. It was a mountain river, steeper and faster almost than it was wide. The water leapt and foamed in its channel over and around huge limestone boulders. In the late afternoon light the waters were dark in the pools and eddies. The overhanging trees had none of the brightness that the trees high up on the ridge bore still in the fiery orange sun. Looking down on them from the road they lacked the same angular distinctiveness as the dark waters, as if the waters that imbibed them nourished this darkness. The tumbling, sucking, rising and diving waters in the long sections between the dark still stretches was a white mass of motion and foam, appearing unreal coming out of darkness for a brief tumult in light to subside in "darkness". It was the sameriver that he remembered as a boy fishing in from a gravel bar where the river flowed silent in deep greenness. But that was farther down stream. Here the river wound serpentine through a deep heavily forested gorge. The road clung to the steep rocky banks which were covered in cudzoo whose tendrils spiraled up the telephone poles and crept out onto the road bed at night. His father had planned to take him and his brother hunting somewhere up in the mountains with him one fall, but then there was That February. His brother went to Louisville and he to Alabama; and now all his nephews and cousins had left for the cities, leaving the old people dead or sitting on their porches, in the dark, waiting and watching the glow on the horizon.

The car, pulling down under the strain of the road's grade, began to misfire and the exhaust fumed up through the holes in the floorboard. Dick Taylor's wife's head, resting flat on the top of the seat, oscillated back and forth as the sharp curves threw its momentum to and fro. Awaking at last with her face greyish-blue and hair matted with cold sweat, she muttered, looking at her right foot with mesmeric eyes as if addressing it, "I'm sick." Dick Taylor looked sideways as he wrestled the shaking steering wheel through a tight bend in the road and met her eyes as she looked up out of the mantle of nausea which distorted her face with death's pallidness. For the first time he saw something in her eyes that was of a suffering more intense than any from a bodily sickness. It was as if this nausea was a subtle layer ever present under her outer character, but even in its control over her an even subtler more painful layer was present, and that Dick Taylor saw in the instant that he turned from the road. There was something there that was so horribly alone that it was unknown to the subsequent overriding layers that were Dick Taylor's wife. But perhaps it was that solitary depth of her character that informed all the others, causing her to so blindly attach herself to an indifferent dog, or to wake up in the night in cold, black, terror: alone.

Within a half a mile Dick Taylor found a wide spot in the road with a picnic table and several trash cans that over-looked the river gorge. With the car stopped in the glass strewn gravel Dick Taylor's wife opened her door and leaned away from the car, still holding to the door handle. As a violent wave of retching hit her Beth Lyn squirmed out from the back seat through the open door, dashing past the trash cans where a lean black-faced raccoon was tottering across the road. Seeing the wild-eyed onsurging dog, the coon ran across the road and disappeared into the woods. Dick Taylor watched the house dog vanish into the vegetative darkness and his wife on the end of the seat, sobbing between convulsions, with the cold impassiveness of a bus driver watching customers exit at a bus stop. Turning off the sputtering motor he was aware of the roar of the river for the first time.

It was sometime before Dick Taylor's wife regained stability from her sickness. They sat at the picnic table until the nausea passed, and then looking up at the steep mountain slope across the road she pointed with a cool steady finger, "Beth Lyn's gone". She stood up as if to commence a search for her but the dizziness and fever came on her a second time. Dick Taylor rose and putting his arm about her hot moist shoulders said, "We'll stop at the first place up the road and get you something to drink and you can take your pills." But as he said the words he saw that she had momentarily forgotten the sickness and now wore that female look of reproof that has certainly launched more ships than Helen of Troy ever could. He would have to find the dog.

He entered the thicket where he had last seen Beth Lyn and the coon., and was immediately faced with the steepness of the ground which often made him grab branches or small saplings to keep from falling backwards. The first part of his ascent was covered with a dense growth of laurel and sawbriars. At times he resorted to crawling on hands and knees through the thicket. After only a short ways up the slope Dick Taylor dripped with sweat. The moist leaves and dirt spilled into his shoes; twigs from the laurel slid down his back and his face was slapped often by branches. The idea of trying to find a dog in such a place further frustrated his attempts at progressing through the undergrowth. He called several times, but even his voice could not penetrate but more than the surface of the vast terrain he was entering.

The slope continued on at a steep angle, but it soon became a more open woods. Walking was easier now that he could see uphill and down and get a feel for space, but he was unable to see through the canopy of the trees' foliage. Dick Taylor's mouth became so dry from the exertion of the climb and repeated attempts at calling that he could call no more. Immediately he set aside any plans for recovering Beth Lyn and started to search for water. He thought he heard a creek or a small branch as though it were tumbling over rocks above him, but after climbing up to the source of the sound found that it was gone, having been the wind in the tree tops. Sweat ran from his hair and forehead in rolling freshets down his nose and cheeks. His temples throbbed and his leg muscles burned with each step. Slow resignation began to creep in on him which increased the frustration at having made the attempt in the first place. It was unconscious. It rolled down in his sweat. It was at the root of his dry tongue and it labored in his breath. The dog was gone. Why not admit it and go back to the car? Why not tell her that? Or tell her the dog was dead, killed by a wild animal or sheer impetuosity? But had he not known this back, how long ago, in the laurel thicket? Or even as he sat in the car with his wife doubled over beside him? Had he acted on a hope of recovering the dog or was it the same impulse that had seized Beth Lyn in bolting from her only security, even if it rested in a partially unstuffed car seat? Impulse for what? Yet he still climbed upward. This question of movement engulfed everything for him now. All the pain and frustration, all the thirst and anger did not turn him back, but up through the hot farmland in Tennessee. Had carried him out of the Alabama steel mill. Had it all begun on the bus ride south several lives ago on that rainy winter day?

He came to a stone outcropping on the side of a ridge and threw his body to the ground where he lay panting. He sat up suddenly, having sensed that the sound of the river which had been so ever present at the beginning of the climb was now gone. He felt the presence of darkness coming on, as one might sense the sudden presence of a dangerous animal watching one's every move. In the distance he could make out the form of mountains, big and undefined, and from that direction a breeze stirred the tree tops with a sighing sound. In the darkness he heard a whippoorwill call -- the call that ever sounds distant. He did not know.

Rosa

Of what have I been left to speak

But roses and of innocence,

Of perfect time and sorrow's tears

Rosa

Of what have I been left to speak

But roses and of innocence,

Of perfect time and sorrow's tears

Left in moments of the past

And hidden in the blooming flower.

The days grow short,

The petals drop,

We lose ourselves from what we said;

Forget the stillness of the pond,

The summer sun, that time, this life.

Then time again, we circle back

To let me speak

Of stillness and the comeliness of flowers:

The rose is past,

But I have seen

Its vision in its suppleness.

Jim Hood

Job Complaint

*Out back of the church in an early sun
He knelt by a fence
Stirring the whiteness in a can of paint.
So thick and soft the ooze looked right for eating,
'It looks like the devil!' the minister said,
And now the lad was working there
To vanquish rails with strokes of white.
The job was more the minister's than his
He only covered what the eye could see,
Nothing more than needed to be done,
Especially where the fence was hid by bushes
Or open to the sun.
He started slowly and kept the pace
Disguising wood and beaten stone
Like a woman in fixing her face.
Along about three when the shadows were longer
And the fence seemed its longest,
He called it a day,
The rest of the devil could wait.
There were flowers he'd crushed
In painting away;
He remembered their glow,
He remembered he wanted to miss them.
They were yellow and bright
Like the one he'd been left once,
The one she had picked in the night
Leaving for him to see.
Now he had flowers again. . .
No, the devil could wait,
He would finish the job tomorrow.*

Chip Loughlin

Cain

He never thought the soil would be this poor.
Six inches down, not even that in spots,
And it was gone.
You lived afraid of wind up here
Although secluded in a wall of spruce;
Only scrubs had roots enough
To keep from being blown away.
No!No! He liked the work!
They mustn't ever charge him that!
He could always loose himself in ploughing,
Or fashion chores at yesterday's expense.
The sweat and dust it was that pleased him,
And aching tiredness made the darkness tame.
But now he had the harvest stored
As if he'd meant to harvest death -
Nothing looks more painful than a field-
With winter coming on.
They claimed that he had run away
And now they'd say he found he needed back.
He hadn't found a thing
Except the time to feel the wind.
He didn't want back home
But just another place to run.

Chip Loughlin

ignotum per ignotius

Darkness:
momentarily his eyes will open
to focus upon the apparitions
pressed against the lens.
(In the warm silence the protege felt:
the pounding of her wild heart
the shelter of her overhanging limbs
the cadence of her natural corridors.)
closed,
his eyes brush against images
trapped inside his camera obscura,
as if he could see within.
(he outlines her face in chromium oxide green
big broad strokes he would be taught, can fill even the largest canvas.)

already, these few thoughts
have sketched a reality which prevents him from sleep:
he arises.

Dawn:
he lies atop wet grass within his verbal landscape.
fire
has scattered his ghosts
along the camp site's perimeter.
a series of ephemeral thoughts astonish him:
--earthworms stirring the moist soil
--the winds' authority filling rough, closely woven cloth
--intoxicating waltzes sweeping the corps de ballet
through shadow and light.

my hands will be like worms he thought.
i will move my fertile earth
into the shape of cities.
camera lucida.
"in hoc signo vinces"

Daylight:
the world rotates silently beneath him now,
in his technologic
angelic
vision
land slips into sea night melts into day.
a cold and distant canvas filled with his dreams.

his silken artifacts
shroud her horizon as leaves whirl before the delusion.
momentarily his eyes will open
to a cadenza on a vacant stage.

Thomas Fleming

The Apple and the Nun

Once I heard that Holy Mother Mary
Took an apple by the core
To pitch it far and far away
That we might be delivered up
And spared the heresy
Of luscious fruit and fragrant flower.
In sensual we reminisce
Much too much of cunning beasts
And happy times in earthly bowers.
We strike our plight
A harder blow
And melt into a wasteful place.

Ah, but in battle men should gaze
On that great nun
Who bore the son
Of all of them--
The holy consummation of
A blood-lust and the girded loins.
And we could put upon her prowess
With our shields--
To leave behind the mortal ways
And cleave the holy body to our breast.

As Adam's fall was surely done
By knowledge borne of womanhood,
The ancient apple frightened men
To seek the blessed virgin's womb--
Where still unbroken sanctity
Got power out of innocence

Jim Hood

For Great-Uncle Mon.

Piano playing in the summercity
with flashes of daylight
shooting off a million windows

I only heard you once

People speckled
Mica freckled
steamy sidewalks
amble across the city as
your age-stripped
freckled fingers
amble across the ivory

and only once.

It's a still now
and so are you
and I'm stuck here
waiting for the encore.

Anonymous

End of the Night

Slapping sneakers lightly on wet pavement
He zigzags onward, well content.
Rain falls under a streetlight,
But to him (eyes half closed,)
Each one is a star streaming shafts of light.
With head raised and jaw lowered he moves on,
Able to touch but not clutch all that he sees and hears.
Earlier it was that whiskered man on the stool next to his,
sketching old age but not impressing the point enough. Not caring to.
Now, homeward, asking of himself and his eyes,
He looks at groups of spectral lines
And thinks of times when he's /noticed movement
(little stars pouring in an arc out of big stars, changing color with speed)
/and thought of previous times when
he's wondered
about wondering.
The horizons start their slow spin around him;
He moves with some hesitation towards home.
Recollections of distant light will bury in sleep
painfully dulled
thought.
Nothing to keep.

Dick Forrest

I DON'T EVEN WAVE GOODBYE

I'm not myself
 I mean
 the man who writes
 is still me
 but I'm not involved
 It's kind of wierd really
 sitting on the bank while
 the boat that is me
 slips peacefully along towards
 the waterfall
 There's no sense
 of danger, only its careless presence
 of future, only that it will
 sometime
 and maybe even not then
 only nothing
 And I don't even wave goodbye
 the boat doesn't know
 where it is
 and the river doesn't care
 and the water's too cold for wading
 It's all very sad
 I always enjoyed sailing
 I used to be pretty good at it
 but that's all part of the boat
 who, as you know, doesn't feel
 tomorrow
 doesn't see
 the waterfall, the end of the edge
 me, sitting on the bank
 doesn't know
 itself
 The man who writes
 lays down his pen, and waits
 but I don't say anything
 I don't even wave goodbye

Paul Swain

Brooding Death

This morning I awoke to find my mother dressed in white.
 Wedded to the Winter.
 She was blanketed thickly and I had to dig deep to see if
 she lived still.
 All the land was covered by a crisp glistening mantle
 and in the forest the trees were numbed and
 arthritic, trapped in the midst of some lost, grotesque
 dance.
 Nothing stirred, all was silent.
 It seemed dead, this world. It seemed a waste-land, an icy
 desert with the bleached bones of the aged
 scattered here and there, their wedding veils
 once fresh and young now lay halfburied in
 the frozen sand.
 Although I saw it dead, I saw it beautiful.
 So cold and quiet, completely enveloped in a great abalaster
 shell.
 Silent and brooding, keeping its secrets to itself, the land
 was untouchable. Or if touched, it stung flesh
 with white flame.
 It is a beautiful, terrible, desolate thing, this distant
 frosted Earth.
 In Winter, white is the colour of mourning.

Thomas M. Abrams

DECEMBER, 1944; SOMEWHERE IN EASTERN EUROPE

There was a train in the snow
 soldiers all around
 machine pistols steaming
 freezing bodies on the ground
 in the snow
 Smiling soldiers with their guns
 proud of their deed
 shrunken children in their arms
 women weeping for families freed
 with their guns
 The young mother white with frost
 escaped from death
 daughter sobbing at her breast
 futures floating on clouds of breath
 white with frost

Paul Swain

STONEHENGE

There is no hold
 to my history
 dangling like a thread
 spun by an inch worm
 hanging like the Verazzano Narrows
 over the Atlantic (Who needs Brooklyn anyway?)
 weaving stodgily to England
 where there are towers and aspirations
 where there are stones that say
 "We are because we were
 And the wind cannot move us
 And the earth cannot change us."

But the hands of men
 adamant as Milton,
 calloused as summer heels,
 have changed you in a thousand ways.

They rubbed your back
 and massaged your sides,
 smoothing out the rough edges,
 altering your shape and disposition.
 Then calling it protection,
 they roped you in on an open plain.

Someday they'll change your name too.

Ellen Boulle

Whitestone

There used to be a time
 When any spring-filled morning
 Would best be spent
 Atop the rock upon the hill -
 A huge, white stone
 Beside the path
 Within the woods
 Silent to the distant
 Valley's forms of motion -
 While knowing well
 That all good men
 Must have their silent stone.

Chip Laughlin

Rose Delavia

Rose Delavia puts her hand upon her head
Looking out the window at the sun, final
In its course, and says

"I do not know
If what I feel, now, as the twilight ends,
Is a feeling of sadness, or regret."
Shrouded in the growing darkness of the house
Her fingers lightly touch the curtain's hem,
Outlined softly in the failing light, as
Her eyes sweep past the roofs of houses, seeking
The dying sun rooted in the stems of the trees.
She says,

"If I hold my hand like this,
Just so, its fingers resting lightly on the glass,
I can see the dim reflection of another hand,
Outside, reaching in."

Seized suddenly by
The dim cold and the lonely, empty room
She turns, and feels the outline of her silhouette
Stark against the faded window.

"I know,"
She breathes, "when I stand like this--
Here and now, indistinct in between two worlds--
The agony of the night and the despair of the day."
Unseen, her fingers close into a fist.
Angrily she turns, and imagines broken
Glass and bleeding hands and a bitter, bitter sobbing.

Her eyes, like two small stars, shine behind the lightless
Window, moving slowly, back. The oncoming streetlamps
Murn their images into the windowpanes.

Bill Meikrantz

One Rainy Day

Up there my brother sat
On any rainy day,
The window on the left.
I don't know why,
Perhaps he liked the rain
Or had to see it stop.
You know how children are.
One day he watched a woman climb the hill;
She was old as I am now.
He watched her all the way
As if to see her safely in,
Then bothered me for play:
"I wonder why she climbed them so?
Her tread was fearless up the hill
Then one by one each step,
I wonder why so slow?
I'd have jumped them in a bound
And left the rain behind."
I dismissed his prying then
and ordered him to go;
What silly things that boy could find
To entertain him so.
Yet now I can't but bear to think
There was more than just his asking;
That lady's speed still haunts me
Long years beyond her passing.
Time was long with room for speed
When I was once so young;
But now I look for slowness
Before these days are done.

Chip Loughlin

CIRCUMSTANCE

Patterns of sunlit promises upon a city street,
Hushed whispers of love between storefronts
Along the boulevard
And the silent paths of remembrance that bind
Eyes to each and lips to others
All amid the shadows of an afternoon sun

Shadows among cluttered tenements of unfulfilled
Hopes where wind-scattered dreams dance upon
Avenues of despair and come to rest under foot, or beside
A sleeve of the Brother of Cities who moves like an
Evening star, the silent sanctuary, whose
Loneliness shines for one to wish upon.

Here, my friend, lay the backward smiles
Of afternoon and evening, resting upon
The wind of fifth-month showers.
A fragmented portion of time
Unevenly cut, and disguised
As part of a tear.

Nathan Null

Moonchild

You come into my mind
Leaving me numb
With fires burning
Father moon over mother sea
On the bare white gelding
Through the black veiled night
You will run free
I can't tell you now, you won't understand
The beautiful one
My hostage

Ben Petrone

Coming Back

From over the sea I came, sailing troubled waters.
The chagrined wind tossed the naked prow upon the shore.

From over the sea I made my way into a haven, a place trusted and true,
caulked tight to keep out crueller waters.
In the past this port had embraced me as a mother would her child,
clasping me in its soft arms, lulling me to sleep, from its breasts
I would find my dreams and snuggle into them, safe and sound.

But I have found that Time can be cruel and upon my return I
did not learn of the crack in my window until it was too late.
As it happens, one evening the sea drained away through the gap,
and reality, free to enter, crawled through the tear, danced across
my body as I slept and bit me like a flea beneath my underwear.

I awoke that morning sorely wounded and sensed the chatter of the
world outside.
Through the window I could hear their voices and between the blinds
I could see their ivory arms lifted towards me, opened in invitation.
In a fury I drew the curtains and brooded that day, later I tried
to stuff an old T-shirt into the crack but it was useless.
My wound became swollen and painful to the touch.

Madly I cried to the pictures on my walls for solace but the portraits
and landscapes were silent, the nudes had no voices and the old card
players would not turn from their game. Perhaps they were too old to
hear the wailing or were intent upon dark, unspoken secrets of their
own, I do not know.
But still, underneath the window they called to me, laughing and
imploring, singing their songs.
At last, my will not so strong as Great Ulysses' was,
I gave myself unto them and since that time, deep oceans of dark
blue-green have given way to russet coloured hair deeper eyes of blue
and mystic, yielding flesh.

Thomas M. Abrams

When?

December 6, 1978?

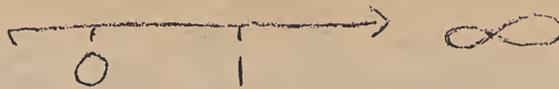
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pondering, wondering, hoping,
my mind slips away . . .



Domino Theory #3789: apleatothoseincharge

Slipping into the white spots on their dominos,
they make the alligators cry shoes
while pockets empty,
and shoelaces untie,
and minds develop into brilliant garbage scows:

"Hiawatha," said the snake, with a grin,
"come into the garden and
I will make you well again,
happy again."
"Hiawatha," said the phone, with a grin,
"is out of the office at the moment.
Please call back later." and
later and
later
and
now:

the man-in-the-moon has retired
to a summer home in Miami
to escape the cold
and the taxes,
and the taxis,
carry him everywhere and
everywhere
and
everywhere he goes,
the moon-in-the-man is waning
as the full man fades:

In answer to the prince of denmark:

Only monkeys with misplaced thumbs
could destroy everything so proficiently.

Heidi E. Hirschman

T.V.

An alternate energy source
A mind for the mindless
Plot click blah

Forty seven killed in Mexico City
A car race down 47th street in San Francisco
Gulf Oil owns as much as forty seven African
Countries combined.
Stock market falls forty seven points in one day.
The U.S.S.R. plans forty seven more nuclear
Stations at 47 million dollars apiece.
Red dye number forty seven is found to consume
Fourty seven times its weight in excess urination.
An oil spill of approximately forty seven square
Miles was reported off the coast of
Click

Burp. I'm full.
I can't take this any more.
Without depression
Would you know happiness?

Richard Fulton

Alone in the Woods

Silence is unbelievably noisy
The smallest sounds seem to scream.
Listen, a leaf has fallen in the water
A bird sings a song to a lost lover.

Closely, the moss has speckled spots\$
Saphire and torquoise await a lucky beetle.
Water bugs skate without ice on the lake,
Creating ripples that may not ever reach the shore.

Now with the earth beneath my back
I inhale the same air a squirrel would.
Rolling in the crunchy leaves
My nose reminds me of rakes, leaf piles, street cleaners.

Broken twigs scratch
The unreachable areas of my back
As I squirm like a dog with fleas
In the leaves and dirt that feel real.

I wish I was naked
Running through a grassy field
Chasing a summer breeze
And winning.

Peacefully stretching
My mind reaches for the clouds
Flying at the same heights
As the bird who circles his favorite nest.

Feeling a cool evening breeze
I open my eyes
And my world storms back to me
Like a thunderstorm you can't outrun.

Richard Fulton

GUILFORD LITERARY PAPER

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