**Cradled**

Madly swerving
it's pouring down hard
smacked round a curve
first breath
the screeching, lurching
surging on
bright lights - hit
stream by
flash again
twisting fiercely - up...down
cradled
we Rrrock
*Sally L. Cook*
HELLO AGAIN

The idiot in me watched your return
and clapped its hands
I tried not to smile
though you did.
You parade in my eyes
and disappear
did I just see?
But the idiot is clapping its hands
in time with your drumroll
I on the tightwire
twist slowly away
My one-handed friend becomes silent
again you have me strung.
Sally L. Cook

de ja vu

staring into your eyes
I see myself reflected
in you.
in you,
reflected
I see myself
staring into your eyes.
Barbara Ellen Zirl

Greg Staley
Comfort in White
there are washing white machines here
many it seems here
swishing slow then rapid rinse
i'm walled in this room dear
sitting on one of them
motionless for the moment.
We made them from our metal
and they're lucky to be settled
white walled room they won't move
but i have got to leave here
it grabs my stomach hurt
because i fear, i fear.
dryers too and real estate guides
watching with me, two students
and housewives but i bet
they aren't thinking of how it will hurt
to leave this laundry washing mat
and venture out without a hat and less
and less and less and nothing more
except earning, not burning, coins for the slot
not crying at night there's comfort in white
like christmas snow and blossoms virgin
i don't like it though and i leave
sometimes cry, but for a while it's a refuge.
John LaPlaca
Whitman in the sun, a glowing golden-green in the grass
Whitman on the breeze, soothing warm soothing cool soothing
Whitman on a touring bike, a speed for every need
Whitman asleep in a baby carriage, dreaming to the music of his
mother's Spanish voice
Whitman in blue jeans, so "mellow" from the high, "laid back"
to the brink of catatonia, 8 track tapes & vcrs
Whitman sightseeing with his nuclear family, loving wife & 2.3
kids (Lil' Point Three in a harness-leash, waving an American flag)
Whitman, dirty, picking thru trash, picking thru dirty trash, O Whitman
Whitman with wings, singing in a tree of living thru clouds
Whitman & friends, laughing loudly and chattering in a foreign tongue
Whitman with a frisbee, cut-offs, bandana & a cold drink - the pepsi generation
Whitman the devil woman, wearing short shorts & hi-heels, "god, how ya shake
that thang"
O! Whitman on the subway!
Whitman in a police car!
Whitman on roller skates!
Whitman jogging!
Whitman! Whitman! Whitman!
Whitman the American
Walt Whitman is america on a sunday afternoon
And we are the sleepy dark night that follows

Karen

When I saw you on the grass today
I quickened my pace,
But-
The lunch I had just eaten,
Weighed-
My feet down.
So,
I wobbled to a point of dual intersection.
You laughed and called
My actions
Bulging histrionics.
I remember the wetness in my blue sneakers,
And the clever way
We matched
People to umbrellas
And
Clouds to puddles.
The whole time
You never stopped smiling
And
I never stopped trying
To make you laugh

Teresa Layden

Charles Dennis
Poem

The relationship between desiring sex and giving birth to art is the unwritable topic; making ants crawl in the dust-vacuum of the moon.

This leads to a nose-twisting and inobvious question.

If poetry arranged like prose is poetry, is prose arranged like poetry still prose? Does it depend on how breathing the language is?

---

I DON'T WANT NO CREMEN

1

NICE place Dedalus, what's got in that jar?

- A shark's heart and an Irish penny.

= 4.7

= 2.46

Russell Shorto

The smart reply is in no stone.

It's December twenty-fifth, and tonight, art or sex I didn't want to hear, but I'm listening to the chipped point mildewing above as I lay in bed for a soft sibyl swimming in the mind of a naked boy.

Curt Lovelace
Creme de la Creme (de la Wheat)

Cream o' Wheat. It sounds innocent enough, doesn't it? It's got the picture of the little black guy there on the box, smiling at you like he's just so glad to be in your happy home. And the stuff is good, you know? Really; a little milk, a few chunks of butter, and you've scored a royal meal. At least that's what my friend Elwood Baker thought as he trudged to the kitchen one cold and rainy winter morning.

Elwood was home from College on a semester break, and was spending this particular day indoors, due to the foul weather. His day began around 16:00, when he first gathered the strength to turn on his tube and watch some daytime reruns. Up first was the Andy Griffith Show - oh, something about whatitsname Don Knotts getting himself locked up in a cell by some hoodlum motorcyclists & Otis the town drunk (in a fit of soberness) saves the day & was given a medal & the whole town was there & Howard Sprague made a speech & somebody proposed a toast to old Otis & of course he got wasted & ended up locking himself up in a cell to sleep it off. "All's well that ends well," yawned Elwood, mindlessly quoting Shakespeare as he, being an English major, was apt to do.

Then it was 10:30 & time for the Hollywood Squares show, but first a word from our sponsors. "Enough of this noise," thought Elwood, "I need some music, yes, a little Miles, 'In a Silent Way.'" He put the album on and turned the TV sound off at the exact time that the commercial came on. You know the one: little Joey bopping around in the snow, blissfully screwing off under the protective eye of a trailing bowl of Cream o' Wheat, seemingly like a spirit. Funny how that there guardianangle Bowl of Cream o' Wheat never seemed strange to me when I saw it as a kid," he mused. "Ah, it must be college ... but damn, I am getting hungry. I wonder if we have any of that stuff around here?"

They did. So, with Miles Davis & Wayne Shorter softly harmonizing from the stereo in the backround, with Peter Marshall & Paul Lynde soundlessly guffawing at some hollywood hi-jinx from the screen Elwood cooked himself some nice hot steamy gooyey Cream o' Wheat. He smiled when he remembered the commercial with the guardianangle Bowl, and lightly wondered if he'd get one too, and if so, what would it look like, how much Cream o' Wheat would it contain, etc. It wasn't until he had eaten his first bowl & was about to prepare another, that Elwood noticed something hovering in the air near his head. "Yea! Good God Almighty, It's the Guardianangel Bowl. Aaauuggghhh!!!" Puzzled and downright scared, Elwood swung frantically at the Bowl, trying to knock it down. No luck, the Bowl dodged every punch & floated out of Elwood's striking range. "Bloody arful dodger," he grumbled. He reapproached the Bowl slowly, this time waving one hand about, trying to destrack it, while making grabs for it with the other hand. But the Bowl was falling for none of it & floated soundlessly to the other corner of the kitchen. The album was over; and the only sound was the electrical buzz from the TV set, which Elwood at first thought was coming from the Cream o' Wheat Bowl. But the Bowl made not a sound. He glanced at the Tube as somebody got a secret square. He sighed loudly & went back to preparing his second helping. After a few minutes, the Bowl slyly floated back to where Elwood was standing. This is just what he wanted. He appeared to be involved in the stirring process when, with a fierce battle cry, he whirled around & lunged at the Bowl. He didn't even come close. The Bowl darted like a breeze back to the corner from whence it came & Elwood stood there, shaking with frustration.

Shortly thereafter, he again went back to preparing his second bowl of Cream o' Wheat. In spite of the trouble it was causing him (or, actually, because of it) Elwood was still quite hungry.

At this time, Elwood's mother entered the kitchen thru the backdoor, as she just returned home from the supermarket with a few middle-of-the-week-specials. "What's that bowl doing flying around your head? What's this, some kind of trick? You better not spill any on my floor!" she grumbled, as she transported groceries from the rain-soaked bag to the chilling refrigerator. She was not in good humor.
Aldo was the first to complain. "Hey man, this is ridiculous." Elwood knew that.

Lipton was next. "You know, I feel like an idiot, racing around with this evil bowl of shit following us." Elwood knew that.

Then came Lamont. "Geez, I just wanted to come out, relax, party, and just cool out, you know? Not participate in the Great Chase? You know?" Elwood knew that also.

"Um...maybe you should...um...drop me off...at, uh, home...I guess..." He stammered quietly.

"Yeah," they agreed.

The rain had ceased, and a cold wind blew apart the clouds to partially expose a naked moon. In spite of the cold, Elwood sat outside on the front porch of his house, staring into space. He was thinking about his sanity. And, in spite of the cold, the Bowl jumped about Elwood's head happily, like a puppy. God only knows what it was thinking.

Elwood waited until 11:30, when he figured his folks would be asleep, to return inside. He really did not need the hassles. He entered the door & quickly shut it, hoping to interfere with the Bowl's progress. No such luck, it danced right on in with him.

"I thought I told you to lose that damn bowl!" His concrete & gravel father was still up. "Damn thing's irritatin'!"

IRRITATING??! Good God, Dad! Iff you only knew! thought Elwood as he nodded & quickly walked into the kitchen. He went straight to the knife drawer, pulled out a biggie, marched directly to the cupboard where the box of Cream o' Wheat was stored. He grabbed the box, and began stabbing at it wildly, hoping that in some voodoo kind of way, he could kill the wretched Bowl. But no, the Bowl just happily buzzed about the room, waiting for Elwood to make his next move. "AAUUUGGGHHH!" He grabbed the tattered box & poured its contents down the garbage disposal. "Die! Die, you bastard! Die!" he screamed.

"What's all this noise?" The elder Baker entered the kitchen. "You mean you didn't get rid of that bowl yet? How many times..."

JESUCHRISTALMIGHTY, FATHER! THE GODDAMN THING FOLLOWS ME EVERYWHERE! I CAN'T LOSE IT! I CAN'T KILL IT! I CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO IT! IT JUST KEEPS FOLLOWING ME!" Elwood broke down, fell to the floor, sobbing.

His father scratched his belly, farted, and shook his head. "All I know is that I never had no problems like this when I was your age, I'm not gonna ask you if your usin' drugs, I'm just going to bed." He shook his head & was gone.

"My own father..." mumbled Elwood as he cried. The Bowl offered small consolation.
After a tearful sleep, Elwood hesitated to open his crusty eyes. He wanted to delay looking at that hideous Bowl as long as he could. Suddenly, he bolted out of bed and into the bathroom. Like a shot, the Bowl followed him. He quickly hopped into the shower, his only escape from the omnipotent and omnipresent Bowl: it patiently waited outside the curtain.

It watched as Elwood dried himself and got dressed, mumbling, "I'll be goddamned if I'm going outside this house till I get rid of this sucker." He stared at it hatefully for a few long moments.

Mr. Baker had already gone to work. Mrs. Baker had left a note saying she was visiting a sick friend. Elwood cooly & calmly picked up the phone & called the General Foods Company. He had some things to say.

"Good morning, General Foods," said a cheerful voice. "Let me talk to the goddamn general, or whoever runs that joint! I want some answers and I am PISSED!"

"One moment, sir," came the startled reply. Click. "My name is Arnold Bunsby. Can I help you?"

"I sure as hell hope so, Bunsby! Now, listen, I ate some of your goddamn Cream o' Wheat yesterday & suddenly this other Bowl appears & it's been following me ever since! You know, like the goddamn commercial! Now, what the hell do I do to get rid of this sucker?"

"What is this, some kind of joke?" Click. He hung up.

"I'm on the verge of a nervous breakdown, and this lousy sonofabitch hangs up!" Elwood cried aloud. "This is too much to bear! I can't deal with this anymore! AAAAAUGGGGHHHH!"

Elwood decided to kill himself. He slowly, dazedly walked into the bathroom, & looked at himself (& the Bowl) in the mirror on the medicine cabinet. He spat into the mirror & opened the cabinet door. Inside, he found toothpaste, make up, some real old hair tonic, 15 cotton balls, about four Q-tips, and a half bottle of Romalco syrup. "Cheers," said Elwood mockingly. He coughed down the aspirin tablets & chased them with almost all of the syrup. He then took a long swing at the hair tonic & his immediately, his head got light, his cheeks & his face in legs got weak. He sat down on the toilet & swirled. The his hands, his eyes swimming & the room on him and Almighty Cream o' Wheat Bowl looked made not a sound.

Charles Dennis

Poem

As an illusion, I don't think much of myself.
I stop worrying about appearances.

The first day, I started the morning as a business suit
and spent the afternoon as a tee shirt.

Though nowadays when I appear
it may be as a person
as a spoon that's been ate with
or panties hot from tennis.

As a shoe, an ordinary thing,
I come with your feet.

Don't be surprised to find me bent over
dissolving from one thing into another.

Curt Lovelace
I am one drop of rain upon infinite deserts.
If I use my power correctly
a leaf will grow;
and soon a flower will bloom,
when the sun shines.

I am one drop of rain.
If I use my power to its fullest,
I will become a storm
and a leaf will die.
A flower will be drowned in tears.

I am one drop of rain.
My power is in my control.
When a storm is needed,
I will drown my oppressors.
But when the sun is shining,
I will form a rainbow.

I am only one drop of rain
but my power can water infinite deserts.

Barbara Ellen Zirl
Jethro slapped the two halves of his Economics book together, considered yelling, gave it a minute and proceeded to do it. He hated economics; everything from the Fall of the Roman Empire to present day love affairs were instigated and maneuvered by economics. People lived, died, killed, loved, hated, stole, cheated, lied, all for money and the power or freedom it rendered. Even he, himself had such a twisted attitude toward life, 'I don't want a lot of money,' he would think to himself. 'Just enough to go where and when I want to, tell anyone who doesn't like it to Fuck off. Was that so much?'

After a course in Probabilities and Statistics, Jethro found it to be a great deal much. He thought he might cut out the house in the city; maybe buy some horses, so he would not go travelling that often. Looking up from his desk to the cork board over it, Jethro focused in on the picture of Char with her perpetual haunted smile, kind of bitchy; it always brought him around; she was so fine, so far away. But then, everything was so far away; family, friends, familiar houses, faces, places... 'This is going nowhere,' he thought. 'If you want to break new ground you have to find new territory.'

Back up on the corkboard, Jethro's mother smiled down at him. She was the woman he loved and hated more than anyone or anything; she was lovely. She was stuck with the mixed emotions, but they weren't her fault. Jethro's mother had to play conflicting roles. He admired her more than anyone thinking her foolish to have wasted so much of herself on him and his sisters. There was no picture of his father on the corkboard, there was no more image of him in Jethro's mind.

He turned away from his desk, away from the corkboard, its pictures, their significance. Focusing in on the rest of the room: Jethro really started diving. Four walls and a walk-in closet. Four fucking walls and a walk-in closet, with a classic view of the next building out the window. That's all it is. 'He had moved in only six months ago, no furniture, nothing to hang on the walls; just a stereo and a bean bag chair. There had been a feeling of extreme solidity those first few weeks. He had sat in the bean bag chair, sipping instant coffee made steamy by an immersion heater. (His sole appliance), listening to rock and country/western, projecting prints on the walls, some chairs, a couch, a desk, a rug and various flora around the room.

Now, he found his imagination always stripping the walls, junking the furniture. Jethro hated to think of himself as irresponsible, but most of the plants had died and a few growths had sprouted from corners of dust.

A walk was needed, he could not sit here in the past destroying the present, leaving the future void. "If you don't like the weather, move." A Carlin line from an old Radio Station routine. Still reverting. "Walk, walk, walk. He grabbed an old leather hunting jacket, his father's, seemed like it had always been his. Half way to the elevator, thought of something, returned to the room to roll a joint and went back out. Jethro like to utilize time, he was lazy. "If you can take a walk, get stoned, clear your head with fresh air, leaving a pleasant buzz by the time you return to the starting point, you have made every minute count," was his logic.

When he got outside, he quickly realized why he rarely took walks anymore. The environment simply did not inspire contemplative strolls. Every corner was an intersection, had had to check himself to make sure no taxi driver or diplomat cut short his future achievements. There were three or four buildings to a block, he always felt he should enter one. Trash cans diggers, change beggars, snipping dogs, and piss happy poodles formed constant obstructions. None of the trees ever looked too healthy and the bushes always seemed to be stuffed with an aswirlry of trash. However, the thing which displeased him the most was the sky, it just never looked right. It was always cut up and picture-framed by the buildings; never open like back home... back home... rusty roads and endless skies... back home. This is going nowhere.'

Jethro went ahead and smoked the refter, setting adrift the majority of his thoughts. He left his home in a Town and Country article, he left his mother at the beauty parlour promising to make his dentist appointment, he left Cher at the airport; a quick kiss, long embrace, some statement, like "Wait, if the stewardesses aren't any good, I'll be right back." Anything to get a final smile, hopefully a laugh, to last the vacuum of the entrance passage. No, he had to leave her somewhere else, airports were no good. 'No good.'

The wind knifed and made him do a about face, leaving him facing Staoe. Staoe froze, his right hand flashe to his left side in a wrap around motion lifting the lazer illusor (it wasn't there) and zapping Jethro to molecules of heat. "Fried meat, Jethro, just fried meat." Staoe cooled the imaginary hot barrel and returned it to its dormant state. "So what's your story Staoe?" Jethro breeze with little reaction to his friend's shenanigans.

"Oh nothing, I'm in search of the legendary White Pimp and all I come up with is your red ass. Hey, how would you react to a felt hat and an earring?"

"Are you tripping?"

"No, no, no. You see, it's my hunch that the White Pimp has left town and is laying low in Bolivia, soaking up some rays and cooking himself silly. So you see, we set you up as the new Harlot Monkey, he gets wind of it, comes back, tries to kill your ass..."

"Now wait a minute Staoe, this is a joke, isn't it?..."

"You won't be laughing when the White Pimp is on your Shit. The White Pimp don't use simulated lazers, you're going to burn Jethro, you're going to burn."

"You are tripping...Micro-Dot?"

"No, No, Blue Dragon, but that's not the point. We have to find you another identity and set you up in an obscure residential area in Batavia, Ill. You see the White Pimp doesn't know anything outside of New York, Washington, Chicago or Toledo."

"I don't think I being so close to Toledo."

"O.K. You pick a spot."

"How about Zoot, Missouri?"

"But there's nothing but good Christians in Zoot, Missouri."

"No good head?"

"Notta. Knowledge."

"Well, I'm not going anywhere where you can't get good head."

"Well, then how about San Francisco: it's famous for good head and then there's the street cars to consider."

"Who needs to consider. Where do I sign?"

"Sign on the blue vibrating line."

"But I can't see it."

"Ah, come with me my friend, I'll show you lines like you've never..."

"Never ever?"

"Not even then."
What ever had been on Jethro’s mind quickly dug a hole and buried itself as he and Stootie strode back toward his apartment. Stootie rambled on about the White Pimp and his death squad of Lebanese Lesbians. Jethro was always amazed at the stories his friend came up with and how easy it was to go along and lose himself for awhile.

Yes, fantasy helped, for awhile. Drugs helped for awhile. Love, for awhile. While he was waiting, waiting...Waiting for what? Jethro vocalized his question for Stootie.

"Serious?" Stootie always like being dressed for the occasion.

"Well, semi-serious, boardering on pseudo-serious."

"Well, the way I see it, we’re waiting for a miracle, like Jesus or an honest government. Mostly we’re waiting for something I like to call Metaphysical Puberty."

"Pardon?"

"Metaphysical Puberty. Some magically mystical transition that will change us and our world completely, leaving us much the same, I have seen it in the eyes of Krishnas and heroin addicts, but I don’t wish to go either extreme. You see, my dear friend, it varies greatly from the traditional puberty, because there was nothing to be done on our end, except in the case of our unfortunate female counterpart: she had to go out and get douches, tampons, and stay free mini-pads, along with muscle relaxers and hot water bottles. But in the metaphysical stage we have to meet it half way: we have to seek it and find it before it will change us. Does that answer your question?"

"No, but it’s pretty incredible anyway."

"Not near as incredible as this cake. Rustle up the key and let’s get out of this deep-freeze."

Jethro and Stootie cranked up some Tull and themselves. They played chess, savoured Jack Daniels’, and conversed on Love, God, and Drugs, the trilogy; they all inflicted extreme and semi-unnatural effects on the user. Eventually they began to forget whose move it was. Finally they didn’t care. Stootie said it didn’t matter because the Black Queen had been screwing the White King and he knew for a fact something strange had gone down between the White Bishop and both the Black Knights.

"Too many mixed emotions man, can’t play a straight game when the pieces are fucking each other behind your back."

At an obscure hour, Stootie said he had to head out. "Nothing wrong with a little R&R, but I can never truly rest as long as the White Pimp persists with his decadence. Think about the felt hat and earring, o.k.?"

"Sure, Stootie. Thanks for your kindness, and consideration; you’re a good son-of-a-bitch."

"I’ll tell Mama you said so. Night Pard."

"Be easy buddy."

The room appeared more congruent now. The progression of stimulants he and Stootie had consumed made it softer, more abstract. There was just the knowledge of what it was; his shelter, with food and comfort to spare. Area enough for thought and creation.

Jethro sat in his kitchen counter chair, at the podium-sized desk; props for omniscience. On the desk was a calandar with two dates circled in red. The first was five days away, his mother’s birthday. He would have to remember to find an amusing card and write her a poem which would bring easy tears. Perhaps he would have the money for something small, carved out of lapis.

‘How old would she be? I was born in ’58, she had been twenty-five, it was ’80...forty-seven...menopause...death of puberty.’ Jethro wondered if his mother had experienced Metaphysical Puberty. She was fairly religious and drank healthy quantities of wine. She talked of days in New York, courtships, and endless dances. She laughed and cried with equal nonchalance. ‘Maybe so, but close enough.’ He concluded.

The second red-circled date was about three weeks off, Spring Vacation. Flight home; rusty roads, endless skies, Char’s warmth. Jethro looked up at the cork board and smiled back at the haughty woman who held his heart. The distance faded as he closed his eyes; his arms stretched out, transforming into streaks of light through time and space. They found Char, curled and covered. They wound around her like a cocoon, then grew dark and motionless. To be her hideaway seemed enough.

Judson Petty
I Am America

"I am America," said the dirty bathroom wall
made of concrete and mortar.
"I am America," said the wall
with spray-painted prophecies
chalked-on profanities
scrawled obscenities
"I am the voice of America."
"I am the voice and skin and smell of America," said the literate wall
surrounding the crippled stinking seatless porcelain toilet
"I am the soul of America." said the pissed on, desecrated, defamed, dirty, smelly
bathroom wall.
Richard Koman

Blind Window

A young boy of five sits at the typewriter
Tap-tap-tapping
A man walks down the street
Touching his cane to the pavement, tap
He raises his head and tilts it to the left
To hear the patterns of traffic.
The boy looks out the window and meets
The sightless gaze of the man and waves
With a smile that turns down at the edges
When the man does not, tap, wave back.
Jonathon Murray

Dad,

Listen, I want to talk to you about what is going on around here.
I can see that you are having a difficult time, but I want to explain something.
Days, I wash dishes in back, and if they don’t say nothing. I take my Comfort out and drink.
But like your glass eye
Let me more clearly define my situation.
Poor. But my poor is making enough
but not hanging on to it, gambling,
sexing street shit, drinking Friday night
to get the week out of my head; then
coming home bitching drunk slapping the old lady
till she can’t get up, while five year old Rose,
curled up in a corner with chin-on-knees, watching,
whines like a baby kitten on the roadside
with its mother run over in the street.
From where I’m writing this letter now,
when I got time to look like somebody in a coffee shop,
I buy the Post and dunk doughnuts.
There, I read the otherworld poor: Cambodia, India,
Africa like the starved pigeons ruffle-beat by snow
that’s covered what food the ground had to give,
drop, like that the poor starve once and die.
I have no such dignity to carry in my hands.
Your Son

P.S. is for plastic shit in an asshole world
that I eat every day because
my lady and I need three hundred seventy dollars to get rid
of what she expects and we can’t feed.
Curt Lovelace
A Green Navy All-Weather Jacket

I have a green Navy all-weather jacket.
Within it I am warm and dry.
It protects me from inclement N.J. weather.
Within my green Navy all-weather jacket
I am secure.

It has fur lining (not real fur) and a fur collar.
In my jacket I feel manly and folding this fur collar up
is not a sissy thing to do.
This jacket is just scruffed enough to be tough, not wornout.
It is mature.
My jacket has two pockets in which my hands stay warm.
And, even though it is admitting I am cold,
It is still a manly thing to place my hands in these pockets
Of this green Navy all-weather jacket.

Victor Robinson

VILLANELLE
"...but never die"

A glistening lake betrays a fickle sky
Where clouds, reflected, drift and blow in play;
These quilts of white just pass, but never die.

Must one look quickly with the naked eye
To hope to see a cycle's secret way;
A glistening lake betraying such a sky?

Of nature's miracle, that in her lies,
Which light the world with rays of day,
Her quilts of white just pass, but never die.

The moisture, that is first in air's soft sigh,
Forms lakes the sun will heat and lift away;
So, glistening lakes betray a fickle sky.

When moody clouds let mist fall, by and by,
Their droplets liquify, then climb to gay
Bright quilts of white, which pass, but never die.

These transformations simply serve to try
To beautify the earth, its wealth repay
A glistening lake that mocks a fickle sky,
Whose quilts of white will pass, but never die.

Dallyne Perry
ONES

1.
When I walk through the red
Sea I consider myself above
All that

1.

1.

When I consider myself a cold
Front a blood shot eye

1.

[**************]

1.

In the fountain
I lie

1.

Getting back to the weather
My mind's eye took
A bite
Out of the sun a cloud
Cringing
Flew at my approach

1.

In a pig's eye

1.

A fish an amphibian

1.

Were one able
One would be self

1.

Sufficient

1.

Times itself

1.

One looks to the weatherman
Before exposing oneself
To the elements

1.

By one
Never occurs in isolation

1.

Is either
Off or on
Will never
Synthesize something
Between states

1.

Buy one
Get one
Free

(For Mighty Sparrow)

1.

Nobody will rain on my parade

1.

For all and all for

1.

In the first
Instant after the bang
The swirl saw
Singularity
Sucking up everything
And the light

1.

Input signal zero
Output one

1.

In this way the weather recurs
Or not

(Interlalia)

1.

Can refuse to accrete
Cloud after cloud passes by
Dumping exactly what we thought
It would somehow become a mass
Movement arriving in order
Equal to the that is
The abstraction that can be lifted
From thing to thing transferable
The count that keeps itself
Above the singular
Bubble inside the level
Rocking for a definable horizon
One feels himself caught
In a plot that repeats bodies
Itself forth in a different guise
Each occasion discrete
The eye sways across mixing but
Accretion comes refusing content
Forecast bubble beneath the glass of the world
Nothing wrong with the particulars

1.

I and I
In-a-i-ration

1.

Becomes you

1.

Bad writing is its own

Reward

1.

Opened his mouth and forced air
Rain water
Filled his lungs

(For Robert Creeley)

1.

and a one, and a two, and a three
"It coulda happened to me."

1.

In time

1.

Saves nine

1.

At a time

1.

Fingers
1.
A
New one
Asserts itself
Tries to unfold
Press it back among
Its number

1.
It was delivered in a box
Special delivery to the addressee
She soaked it in the aquarium after
Signing
For it untied it
With trembling fingers
It turned out
Just what she'd always wanted
It didn't do
Anything
It could be
Counted on

1.
"But, supposing that the total of the poems in the language could be signified by the figure 100, then it is a total in which each figure remains, as it were, separate, a sum of 1 and 1 and 1, each retaining its uniqueness though a fraction of, and contributing to, the whole."
-Stephen Spender

1.
The map shows everywhere
A collage of geographies
Everywhere it touches the world
Bits of colored paper

1.
Wind down the street
Whistles one across
A bottle
Top

(An Identity)
1.
1 equals 1
1.

1.
They thought one stood between
Themselves and the
An unsurmountable that hid it
They could not remember that one
Was of their own and could be carried on
From one to another
Easier than the thing intended
And if there were more
One needn't strain it
Was as easy as one
And one is

1.
Rust
Water runs in
The mouth of a man-

hole

(For A.R. Ammons)
1.

One : more than
And You

(Pretension Poem No. 7 - Subjectivism vs. Determinism)

Some
take giant steps
and some
people take pee-pee steps
and some
body doesn't like it
because you
tea and toast your friends
in the morning
and you
bake and roast your friends
in the evening
and you
mash and mash
and butter 'em up
mash and mash
and butter 'em up

And you
take 3 steps - make it look like 1
take 2 steps - make it look like 8
run run run to the kitchen
but
peek and dash and peek and dash
don't let yourself see you

I
know a dear old man
he lives
in a faraway tent
he makes a
thin breakfast
and he
goes to lunch
and he runs a picture house
and says his prayers on the earth
and he's always eaten mashed potatoes
because their easiest to chew
and he always wears black gloves
and he washes them all the time
and you jesus christ your ego
and you sigmund freud your mommy
and you
darwin chuck the darwin chuck the darwin the
prize for...
prize for...
it's not your fault
you can't help it!

Note: Debate over whether or not to end with a
period (.) continues indefinitely. The Arabic
numeral '1' acts as proviso.

Russell Shorto
Night Life

Sometimes I get caught between the lines of a book or the ideas of some marble-eyed philosopher who spent his time sneering at System over the muscle spasm of his life and arranging his correspondence for Biographer-to-come; then surfaces an insomnia soft, like the larval stage of my childhood from the leaves and the damp lip ground; that shapeless innocent beneath my mattress its tendrils lead out the windows all rope ladders, octopi, fairytale hair and etch my spine with promise the night can’t possibly keep.

T.Z.

I sit outside my window on the concrete ledge with my feet up and my back against the wall: straining to light a cigarette while inadvertently banging a bottle of wine against the bricks. The bottle doesn’t break, but I nearly fall. I look down at the world still going on: the rows of cars and the people blocking their pathways, winding in and out between them like some misplaced thread. The building lean over the streets, cast threatening shadows, and leer at the people.

I take another drag of my cigarette, easing myself into the evening as the outside world fades and the heat sinks back into the earth. The shadows and people fight now in the grey, weaving and dodging about. The wine slowly empties, it darkness seeping out and staining the sky to night. For a bit the darkness hangs heavy over the city, the people don’t wander by so often, the cars have gone home. My back gets stiff and I tilt the bottle of wine to my lips, only to find it empty.

Night surrounds me. Time rises from the street in clouds and then drifts aimlessly. The empty bottle in my hand slips and falls silently until it meets up with the street in a crash of broken glass. The sound of a match being lit flares out at me in loud anger. I sit for a while longer then I see the street lights begin to light up one at a time from the top of the street as if awaiting their cues. Slowly the people come back out of their houses, defeating the darkness, reclaiming the streets as their own.

I look down from my ledge of shadows into the street; people passing by arm in arm, rolling by on skates, or blurring past on bicycles. I shiver a little as a cool breeze and my inactivity meet. Somebody on the street corner gets out a guitar and starts playing a song and the people walking past throw some coins into his open guitar case. I find myself humming with the familiar tune. A crowd of people forms around the guitar-player and one of them, seeing me keeping time with my legs hanging out over the ledge of my window, waves for me to come down. I shake my head at first, but then change my mind. I get up slowly, as my back is still hurting me, and walk downstairs to join the people in the street.

Sally L. Cook

Stuart Kirsh
Divine Life

"Has anyone seen the comics?" Lois asked as he stumbled sleepily into the livingroom. Yes, his name was Lois, just like the girl's name. Actually his name was Zachary, but we called him Lois to distinguish him from the other Zachary.

"No. They should be around here somewhere," said Zachary. Remarkably, both of my roommates were named Zachary. We shared a townhouse with three other people in the Dupont Circle area of Washington, D.C. Zachary and Lois began searching through the nesi of the Sunday paper for the comic section, while I continued thumbing through Book World.

"Well, where did you throw it, Lucas?" Zachary asked.

"I didn't pay attention," I yawned. Our living room was quite long and narrow and when I brought in the Sunday paper that afternoon I got the urge to flee it across the carpet so that now there were pieces of it all along the room.

"Where did Eric go off to this morning?" Zachary asked.

"I don't know," I replied. "Out to educate the masses, I suppose."

"Yeah, but so early?" he said as he handed the comic section to Lois. He had found it under the couch.

"Thanks alot, Zack," said Lois. He walked over to a chair.

"Oh, I don't know where the hell he goes," I said. "Don't worry about him. He can take care of himself." Eric was one of the other tenants in the house. If you were to spend ten minutes chatting with Eric you'd think he was a very nice, normal person. He certainly looked normal. He was about 5'7", slightly dumpy, with a shaggy head of dirty blond hair. The only thing unusual about Eric was that he thought he was the Son of God. He spent a great deal of his time in the park in the middle of Dupont Circle preaching to passersby.

We sat quietly clipping the comics. He didn't actually read them, but he always clipped the Prince Valiant strip out. He had a box in his room with years of Sunday Prince Valiants in it. He never missed an issue. Neither Zach nor I knew why he did it. I'm sure he didn't either. It was just something he always did.

Lois was a bit strange but a really good friend of mine. He was a musician; he played drums in a new wave rock band called The Organelles. He also gave drum lessons to thirteen year old kids who wanted to play "like Keith Moon," or "like John Bonham," or occasionally "like Buddy Rich." We called him Lois because when we realized that there would be two Zacharys living together we said one of them should change his name. I asked Zachary what his father's name was and he said "Zachary." Lois didn't know who his father was so he said his mother's name would do.

"Hello boys," said Joan as she and Lindy marched down the stairs.

"Good morning ladies," said Zack. "I trust you slept well." Zack had a habit of talking in a loud and formal tone; he usually did it with a sarcastic smile so I suppose he did it jokingly, but he was so consistent that I could never really tell where it was coming from. I usually never paid attention to it, but Lois, who had a habit of being tremendously bothered by little things that he thought were stupid, would wince every time Zack talked like that.

The two girls smiled and wandered into the kitchen. They were the newest residents of our house, having just moved in a few weeks before. They seemed very nice, although both were usually rather quiet. They were lesbian lovers and they shared the large room upstairs at the end of the hall.

With the addition of Joan and Lindy the house was complete. All of the rooms were filled, we were able to pay the rent, and we all got along reasonably well. The month before had been difficult because none of us had very high paying jobs and we had had to take up the slack of the empty rooms. Zachary was working for an environmental lobby which paid incredibly little for long hours of work, so he also spent two days a week working at a fruit stand. I worked at a bookstore while struggling to get fiction and non-fiction pieces published. Lois did all right with lessons, but The Organelles, with songs like "Green Secretion" and "Favorite Death" had not yet won the hearts of the Washington mediocrits, and consequently were not even able to cover expenses.

As for Eric, none of us were quite sure what he did for money, but he always paid the rent on time. I had asked him a number of times how he supported himself and he would say something like, "The totality that's life sustains me," or, "I live off the land." I would ask whether living off the land meant he had a herd of sheep in Lafayette Square, or maybe a garden in Arlington Cemetery. "I get by, Lucas," he would answer. "I never worry about such things and neither should you."

We each had a theory for how he got his money. Lois thought that, since he got quite a lot of mail, maybe his "followers" sent him contributions. He did seem to have a group of people who were at least interested in him enough to hang around when he spoke. Zachary thought that Eric might have a part time job that he went to in the afternoons when he wasn't preaching. My theory was simply that he got money from his parents.

I include this matter only to give you an idea of Eric and his oddities, not to have you overly concern yourself with his financial situation, for, however he supported himself, none of us worried too much about him. He was a very neat, polite person and we were happy to have him as a housemate. Yes, he was a bit eccentric, but we didn't mind; in fact, such things make a household interesting; they add color. Eric was the only Messiah I have ever known.

Eric's religion was based on a pamphlet he had written entitled "Chasing the Dragons: It was the tale of a man who was compassionate enough to feel for the problems of the poor and the underprivileged but whose station in society was such that he did not feel capable of either experiencing them firsthand or tackling the injustices in life that brought about their situation. Jude Pendragon, as he was called, had a good-paying job, a nice family, and a home in the suburbs. He was destined for the 'happiness' of the middleclass, but was constantly nagged by the despair that he knew others must live with. He swayed between feelings of guilt and helplessness at not being able to truly despair himself.

"Such is the life of the average American," Eric told me the first time we discussed his philosophy. "Whether or not he knows it," he continued, "his motivating force is guilt for not feeling bad, for not being at the bottom."

And so, I asked, "what is the solution to this dilemma?"

"You can go one of two ways," he said. "You could allow your guilt and depression to grow until you were truly miserable yourself, or you could trample everything in your path and feel no guilt whatsoever towards anything. Of course, one can't just decide which way one wants to go. Your personality determines which extreme you'll lean towards, and your purpose in life should then be to follow whatever path you normally favor. They both end up in the same place anyway. The life of total despair or that which is devoid of traditional guilt and morality: Freedom from Mediocrity."
“And that’s heaven?”
“In a nutshell,” he yawned.
“Well then,” I continued, “how is it that you’ve come to believe that you’re the Messiah?”
Eric sneezed into his hand (he had bad hayfever) and as he did, his stringy straight hair flopped all around his head. “I didn’t come to believe anything,” he said. “I’ve always known it. It seems to me that every so often history generates an individual who knows right from the start: someone whose consciousness existed before his body, I’m kind of the conscience of the human race, and I’ve always known it. When I was a very small child I knew what life was about. I tried to tell my parents that they shouldn’t let their sense of morals stand in their way of achieving things. I told them to stop on people. They half-joked and half-worried about me. They didn’t take me seriously, but then I made a fundamental error with them. They weren’t really the ‘guiltless’ type at all; they came straight out of Judeo-Christian fear and pity.”
“How old were you when you told your parents all of this?” I asked.
“About five. I think,” said Eric.
One Wednesday night I walked into the house and was confronted by Joan and Lindy, the two of them twittering with excitement.
“We’re getting married,” Joan promptly announced before I even had a chance to ask what was going on. I stared at the closet door for a few seconds trying not to look dazed.
“You’re kidding,” I said but I knew they weren’t, so I quickly added, “That’s fantastic.”
“Isn’t it?” said Lindy. She was the quieter of the two and it seemed to me the more serious about life in general.
“Oh Luke, we’ve got it all planned out – what we’ll do – and we’re sure this is what we want.
“Well that’s really great,” I blurted, this time too quickly I thought. “But how can you do that, legally I mean? Won’t somebody say something?”
They both looked at me with total innocence on their faces. “Who would say anything?” asked Joan.
“Well I don’t know,” I said as we walked into the living room. “But you know what I mean. How will you get a marriage license?”
“Oh we don’t need that stuff,” she said. “We’re serious about this.”
“Oh,” I said. “Well, where will you get someone to perform the service?”
“Eric will do it, of course,” said Lindy.
“Eric?” I repeated. “But he’s not a minister or a Justice of the Peace or anything.”
“But he’s God,” said Joan. “That’s good enough.”
“You really think he’s God?” I asked.
“He’s very sure,” she said. “He’s very intelligent and we believe in him. And anyway, we like him a lot, and that’s what counts.”
I knew I was stumbling through my part as the ‘so happy for you both’ friend, but I was taken aback not only by the announcement, but also by their sudden talkativeness. I suppose I should have realized that when announcing one’s marriage one is understandably more chattering than usual, but I had really never heard much more than a sentence or two at a time from either one of them and it was jolt to have my questions answered quickly and in full sentences by someone from whom I was accustomed to receiving only coy bits of conversation.
“Listen Luke,” Lindy said, taking over the explanation. “We know we’ll have a lot of problems along the way, but we’re prepared to fight and stay tough. We believe in us. As for Eric, we think a lot of him. We respect him as a person, and we think he’s a truly pure individual. That’s much more important than having a piece of paper that says you can marry people.”
I was about to comment on what I thought to be their well-mean but naive regard for Eric’s qualifications but Lois came in just then and the girls jumped up to tell him the news. One of the things that amazed me about Lois was the incredible calmness he displayed in certain situations.
“When?” he said, as if they had told him they were planning to go shopping that afternoon.
Suddenly there was a loud clap of thunder outside and the sky crackled with lightning. A mighty blast of trumpets was heard, as if from the stereo. A host of angels appeared before us. The door was blown open with a furious howl of wind that sent Lois reeling into the room: a chorus of heavenly voices burst forth in tumultuous splendor; there was a blinding light from the doorway.
In walked Eric. He wore the usual faded jeans and flannel shirt.
“Hi,” he said.
“Hi Eric,” said Joan. “We’ve just been telling them about it. I’m so excited!”
“So it’s Saturday for sure?” he asked.
“Saturday at 12 noon,” Lindy answered.
“Where?” asked Lois.
“In the middle of the circle, of course,” said Joan.
Eric started to walk towards the kitchen. “Where are you going?” I asked, as if to say, ‘How dare you leave this conversation like this?’
“T0 get something to eat,” he said without turning around.

When Zachary, Lois and I got to Dupont Circle we were surprised to see a group of some 30 to 40 people standing in a semi-circle around Eric. Joan and Lindy, waiting for the ceremony to begin. There were a few people we recognized as friends of Joan and Lindy, and some who seemed by passersby who had stopped to see what the commotion was about, but most of them, I could tell from having seen them with him either at the house or in the park, were followers of Eric.
Eric wore his faded jeans and flannel shirt. The girls were both dressed quite smartly. They giggled a bit, and looked around sheepishly, almost apologetically, at the crowd, for I’m sure they hadn’t anticipated such a large gathering and they were undoubtedly fearful of the spectacle they were creating.
We walked up to the back of the crowd just as things got underway.
“Joan and Lindy,” Eric began, simply enough. “The two of you have decided that each of your lives would be strengthened in your efforts to rise above humanity by a union in marriage. It is not for me to deny your request or even to question your conviction.”
Eric was his usual bizarre, eloquent self, I thought, and just then noticed Joan fidgeting nervously as she and Lindy stood holding hands. I realized that I felt anxious too; something was very heavy in the air. We were standing at the back of the crowd but I felt very conﬁned.
“I would like the two of you now to stop for a moment and contemplate your life together,” Eric went on. “And ask that the others here stop for a moment also, and let the happiness of this union enter your thoughts.”
The crowd hushed as if in prayer. I bent my head, trying to do as Eric asked, but something made me look up. It seemed like the bustle of life around us had stilled. No cars were winging around the circle; no people were about; no birds stirred. I looked down again and sighed, trying to relieve the pressure that had suddenly built up
inside of me. I though I heard a car moving very slowly around to my right, but I Ignored it and told myself to relax and concentrate on the ceremony.

"Now ladies," Eric was saying, "I ask that you simply hold each other tightly and whisper to one another your words of commitment to ..."

As the two girls embraced they were suddenly pulled apart by a policeman. He walked right between them and up to Eric, who looked perturbed but not taken aback.

"This is illegal," the pale, stuffed officer barked, shattering the tense silence, and, shaking his meaty finger around from Eric to the two frightened young women he added, "It's also immoral."

"Oh be serious!" Eric shot back in a very uncharacteristic flush of anger.

I'm not certain exactly what happened next. I know that the policeman said something else and some of the people in the crowd started to yell at him. Then there was some pushing within the crowd and I heard Eric almost shouting something. The policeman pushed Eric to the ground and suddenly people were fighting. Some ran for the policeman. I saw two others racing over to assist him. I remember seeing Lindy crying.

Zachary grabbed my shirt collar. I started to run after him. I turned around to see Lois following.

When we got back to the house we sat for a few minutes to collect our wits, and then we looked at one another.

"What do we do now?" Lois asked. None of us knew. We paced up and down the living room for some time and decided to call the police station. Every extention we were given was of no help. We tried all that day and into the night. Nobody knew what had become of our housemates.

The next morning, as the three of us sat around the coffee table eating cinnamon buns, I came upon a headline in the local section of the Sunday paper: QUACK MESSIAH ATTEMPTS LESBIAN LINK. The Article said that Eric, "an avowed advocate of immorality," had tried to perform an illegal marriage of two homosexual women. It said that he was allegedly responsible for inciting a riot. It said that he had declared himself, "the God of all mankind." It said that Eric, Joan, Lindy, and "a number of agitators," had been arrested. There was no mention of their release.

A short time later Joan and Lindy walked in. Yes, they said, they were all right. No, they did not get hurt in the scuffle.

"Were's Eric?" Zachary asked.

"He's still down there," said Joan, "He didn't want to leave. He's talking to them and they're yelling at him. He'll have to appear in court but they told him he could go. You know Eric."

"Yeah," said Lois, "When he gets bored he'll come home. Lucas, have you seen the comics?"

Rusell Shorto

Lent Gone Mad

Hello again, see my purple and white for penitence, there are more of you today to pick on the very pores of my skin; you'll have to talk about at Sunday dinner; again I am your prey.

Well stare at my tousled hair if you must, I played tennis before changing into and out of black robes, to please you - don't know why - your silks and wools don't fool or stroke or please me.

Hello old dame pink hat in front, as always a hawk in kitted soft nylon, your garters peeking at me from orange-skin legs, shoes of many miles tucked under, you glow.

Hello to you young man so anxious to find your lay; I know your breath is bad, instead of taking bread of life - not my life - you should be listening; give your breath to her.

Hello you bratty little kids, ready to show your new fillings, discuss last week with friends, cry at my voice, laugh at my words, scream at my touch, no respect; leave me, leave me alone.

And all the rest of you hello, I wish I could see you on Wednesday nights, Friday mornings without the hue of colored windows: engaging breasts, fleshy thighs, too-full stomachs finally exposed to me.

All stare with blank faces, I don't care; come lay on my altar, I'll finish my blessings, wave them over you like cat o' nine tails, you write, seem to make you, seems to please you.

Hide from me, I'll find you, my robes tucked away, I sink through your minds and back yards, demanding your money, your young, I will not be forgotten Monday through Saturday.

Christine Emery Kunz
TO BLATTIDAL

Your ass and ankles hanging from under
My kitchen closet door, Roach, I detest you.
From a cottage's white wall you first asserted
Yourself against me -- almost kissing me
While I was nonchantantly awaking.

You followed me -- you and your relatives
Appearing in kitchen cupboards, and even stoves.
You rode my back, or books, to the library,
Slid to my lap, and made me publically
exclaim our neurotic relationship.
My temptation is to even up the score,
To slam tight that closet door.

Michael Glasheen
Graffiti

Scribbled onto the walls of our little world
Like an uneven block of pavement
Laid beside the avenues
Planned with such an eye to perspective

The shadows arching away
From those demon-orange streetlights
Defining the geometries of this city
Lines, squares and boxes
Cut with razors from the fog

Tripping as I climb aboard the bus
Fumbling for the coins
To satisfy the box that gives no change
Finding a seat that I won’t have to share
It’s not rush-hour
And I want to be alone

Across the aisle there’s a girl
Around 16 (or could she be 17?)
With tired eyes that belong to someone older
Uncombed hair falling across her pretty-pale face
That could use some sun

Someone must trust her out this late
Placed her in this green-glass world with us
With directions and a transfer and
“Don’t lose it”
She sits staring into the green-black night
Crumpling the thin paper transfer and about to
Tear it, then smoothing it hurriedly on her knees
And staring again and it’s my stop

The city cut down the trees outside my room
To make the street wider
They used to shade my window
But now that orange streetlight designed to keep down rapes
Flashes pale rectangles across my worn-out oriental
I have to pull the shade down
To get some sleep

Sunrise always comes too early
As I drive past the curving lanes and cul-de-sacs
Of a hazy suburban Sunday morning
Squinting at the whiteness of newly-poured sidewalks
With Mary-n-Tommy hearts engraved at the curbs
Right next to a row of young trees
Staked out so they’ll grow straight
And give lots of shade when the neighborhood grows up

It’s one of those oh so modern churches
Just a cube of glass with four doors
Set in a patch of trees next to the highway
With the sunlight slicing through the leaves
Onto the hardwood ahead of the pews
Glinting off the windshields of the cars
In the parking-lot beyond the trees
So perfectly pretty
Outside our window-wall

Graffiti scrawled onto the back of a bus seat:
“Life is what you make it”
Below that, different handwriting:
“Tell that to a retarded child”

Bruce Marton
An aging limb bends towards the moist, clean earth
which cradles the Iris, the Bleeding Heart
- the noble and the beautiful.
A blossom greedily grabs for the sky and the sun
but gracefully bows
to the moon when she rises.
Maturity has yet to come
it grows with the blossom
and hangs in eternity.

Taste each fruit born by and for you
Roll it around your tongue
Crush it with your teeth
Caress it with your lips

Do not grimace at the offering hand
The body is as sensuous as the mind.
And remember
Ignorance implies only sleeping consciousnesses,
Raise the masses with yours
Raise yours with the masses.

So beautiful one with your soulful brown eyes,
Take your prisms
And throw them into the light-
Your colors are your own creation

Catherine Ormerod
Imprisonment is perhaps, not a suitable description, but its implication bespeaks a state of being which is like enough to that in question, so it will serve quite well as a metaphor:

If bars of steel had enced her
like some animal-type-figure
framed in a gallery among other portraits
of model behavior on display

then there would have been the possibility of escape,
parole, rehabilitation to civilized life

But the (unsteel) bars held her captive
The unwall cage
the actually limitless walls
with infinite exits and means of escape
held her tighter and more steadfast than even chains could

She was trapped in the sense that she couldn’t see beyond the walls
though they were transparent
The served as unboundries
as unwalls
as they actually had always been
Unlimiting,
ever meaning to serve as walls at all.

Had she been an unfree captive
she could have left without the slightest effort.

But she remained in the unwall cell
in the unstructured cage with unlimited bounds
in the unprison of her own imprisonment.
A Mirrored Stream

I.
I lay my body down
on the dead beard
and I spread My being out:
the palms of My hands
cup the whiskers
My back brushes against the burnished bristles
and My legs fall disjointedly
My eyes are turned to your blue
'cause if I look to your left,
right, straight,
back,
My brows will catch metallic glints
or sights of flesh
steel
glass
cement
and I came to experience you
(she is beginning to sit)

II.
i dance circles around Her
like a pagan,
i do not want to dangle
nimble toes in a mirrored stream
But to stand in the ocean
and have the curls pulsate through
and sting my crevices with their
cool tongues

III.
she is winning:
she has lifted Me from
the burned, blond beard
My pupils are lit
I break into a sprint
And--
for a while the air is flowing gracefully
through My lungs--
the road lies ahead like
a dark charismatic lover, open armed

IV.
i'm smiling 'cause
We're like a gazelle:
toes pointed, aimed
towards the blue heavens,
body forming a perfect arch;
gliding onward.

V.
No longer am I dodging dormant dogwoods
the field has too quickly turned to cement
My hair begins to form tight coils
around my head
Eyes begin to burn from the neon
Brain gasps from all the motion
Feet warmed by blood flowing
from ragged glass
The air's scent is now distilled
by the refinery

VI.
I return to the field
and offer Myself
to the just opened, vibrant, green petals
--the beard has turned green
the leaves play gently
on my body
(she resumes position)

Catherine Ormerod

Greg Staley
YOUR POEM

The rat
weasled in
to my room
and sneezed
all over my morning
it grinned
with trash-heap
pleasure
at the waste
it had created
It snorted in the direction
of those in brainless attire
and slobbered all over
its own chest
with pride and admiration
for its tail
Sally L. Cook

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The G.W. literary and graphic artist's collective

So here's Wooden Teeth - finally. I would like to thank each member of my full-time staff; all of the people who put some of their time into the magazine; and all the writers and artists who submitted work for consideration. I would like to give my special thanks to Professor Cloysen and the Publications Committee for the funds to produce this magazine; to Anita, Charlene and Maryann from the Hatchet for their help with the typesetting; and to David, who got me interested in this and then made me believe that I could do it. Thanks y'all.

Charles Dennis

front cover by
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back cover by
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WOODEN TEETH DON'T HURT!

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