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EXILE

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**Group Poems From Sake Circle**

In this stark season
The naked willow’s woven web —
IS FROZEN ALSO, AND BROKEN BY THE WIND.
"So what?", you ask.
"So what.", I answer.
BUT THAT "WHAT" IS ESSENTIAL TO THE PEACEFUL NATURE STATE
What do you do for the weeping willow? To dry its tears
destroys its essence.

WEEP WITH THE WILLOW!

Chop down the sullen willow! Let the white pine raise
its noble head.

DON'T CHOP DOWN THE WILLOW FOR AFTER THE CRUEL WINTER
HAS TAKEN ITS TOLL THE WILLOW SHOWS ITS ENDURANCE
And takes on the cruel summer.

MAKE A WILLOW WHISTLE AND PIPE TWO COOL NOTES
INTO THE HEAT HAZE.

The clouds swiftly swept the sky.

AND WITH THE CLOUDS WENT ALL MY WORRIES.

Approaching my Cheops, Fujiyama, my vulcanized rubber soles crush
Juniper leaves shamelessly.
JUNIPER BERRIES CANNOT TALK BACK!
Without a whimper they leave their stain,
RED, DEEP SCARLET CRIMSON LIKE THE EARTH YOUR HOME,
In that stain is told the true message of life:
ALL THIS FOR JUST THIS!

Until a mountain, pregnant with snow, falls on me,

& WITH THE AVALANCHE WENT ALL MY WORRIES.
Berring. Berring. Too early but... Things a day a do. See Bob but oh... no twelve lunch. Nothing to do about nothing. Brush top brush taww tho.

Out. What would I say? Yes oh? For a living? Well I'm an aimless wanderer. Yes about town, up down allaround, an' Alisa, if you only knew. I know it well — I'm always goin' at home, up at home, there at the house. But you're such a

that. No. Ah well. It wouldn't be right. Right left wrong right write. Words. If she only knew.

Old Ancient. You can't look in on gold. Litter your minutes with... time. Son, I can materialize. Can't we go no dam gammadon't no gammadon't havannah gammadon't talk to folk's to folks or not, Jus' hit the dirt and don't come back at 'em! H'mm. You didn't thing it, did you? But a sack of gold coins. Two of the sacks contain real gold. One is fake. The fake coins weigh one point one ounce each. The real ones.

no. Ah well. It wouldn't be right. Right left wrong right write. Words. If she only knew.

Eyes. Snapemtogether. Fall apart in two years. Probablyhave all the same pictures above the fireplace. Cheap nastiety though. Somehow I don't think that'd work out.

Who's counting?

... A musing of a young writer

(Or: A mutiny of a young writer As a poor man. Hee hee hee.


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(Or: A mutiny of a young writer

As a poor man. Hee hee hee.
For you to discover the meaning of the riddle please find the meaning of x.

drawn on
from the
rest of
from the
card.

Oh wow, its seven twenty five! Now I'm gonna be late. Ah who cares.

For you to discover the meaning of the riddle please find the meaning of x.

One Marriage

After sex
he pinched her cheek
and she lay wasting with him
so he fed her a larger station wagon
and his unborn children between her legs,
When her tears were noticed
he made her drink
but she starved
with the silver fender poised gracefully down her throat.

In a Room

She relaxed back into the bedspread and the matching pillows welled up around her. He lay on his back on the warm floor

Robert F. Youngblood
The Escape

The sun filtered through the trees like gold glitter, peeping in between the leaves. She couldn’t see how blue the sky was when she was squinting into the light. It looked more like a pale, yellowish green. She blinked again. It was bright and she wrestled against her small body. Her hands, clasped behind her knees, suddenly flung back and she flopped into the rustling grass. "I can’t hear you, right or left."

When he approaches to touch your face
your skin pulls out to meet
that fingertip trailing
to touch your face
and in that rushing moment
when his fingers melt your cheek
you can only smile
and smile
and smile.

Becky Hinshaw

Cruel Hand

Around noon on a mid-August day, Evelyn Perkins sat on the front porch of her house in Brookline, Maine, drinking strong coffee and leafing nervously through a back issue of Life Magazine. Ms. Perkins was a robust woman in her late forties, whose strong body was indicative of a strong spirit as well. She had borne stoically the death of her husband, who was killed in the Second World War, and had managed to endure the bitterness of divorce with her second and last husband. At a time when she had needed companionship most, her daughter had married and gone off to California. She hadn’t been back to visit since, although she never failed to phone her mother on birthdays and at Christmas.

Evelyn Perkins finished her coffee and stood up. She gazed on the porch railing with a glancing look and surveyed the lawn, where a single green bush shone against the brown and yellow. Her back arched to the sight of the emerald lawn in a mottled pattern which was so familiar to her. The grass was pressed against the ground but slowly began to rise with jerking movements. She began to gallop through the twined grass, her arms flailing through the breeze. Her hair trail behind and she rose higher and higher. As she soared into the blueness and the yellow light, she glanced below her and smiled.

"God, look at you!" she exclaimed, scrutinizing him with care. "My boy is gone for four years and now he’s suddenly a man."

Evelyn walked around to the driver’s side of Hiram Lingley’s jeep and said, "Thank you so much for picking Abel up at the airport. That was a great help."

"No bother at all, Evelyn."

"Won’t you come in for a cup of coffee?"

"Thanks but I ought to be heading home just the same."

"Eh, that it does Evie. I gotta be sure to get my fertilizer spread and put the tractor in."

"Oh well, sorry you can’t stay. Thanks again."

"I’ll be by too long to take you up on that offer."

Hiram said, starting up his Willys, "Take care now. Welcome home Abel."

Hiram’s jeep rolled smoothly down the driveway, backed up, paused, and wheeled on down the road to his home, Aman Farm.

"Come on honey, let’s get your things inside. I’ve got a roast in the oven and Sam Bemiss brought over some of his potatoes this morning. You must be starved."

"Each carrying a duffel. The two walked along the concrete walk and up the stairs. The garter snake that had been sunning itself peacefully earlier, slithered through the white, lattice slats that covered the front of the porch at their passing.

The two walked through the dining room, one of the guest bedrooms, which served as a T.V. room and headed up the stairs, Ms. Perkins in the lead turning on lights as she went. On the right they came to Abel’s room, opened the door, and dropped the bags inside, the enormous sleigh bed.

"Why don’t you change out of those clothes? I’ll be downstairs if you need anything. How would you like some milk and cookies? I just baked some this morning."

"Those cookies were great, Ma. I think I’ll take a walk down to the point before this rain moves in."

"Okay, hon. Dinner won’t be ready for quite awhile yet."

Abel walked out of the kitchen, down a hall, out the side door, onto the driveway. He took a right and began to walk the four miles to the point.

The air was clean and smelled of rain as he came to the top of the hill where the Naskeag Cemetery is. His father was buried there. He peered through the rusty gates at pure white gravestones, covered with brilliant gold and orange lichen, and surveyed one stone.

"The Escape" - published in The Saturday Evening Post, 1990

"Cruel Hand" - published in The Saturday Evening Post, 1990

Anne Glover

When he approaches to touch your face
your skin pulls out to meet
that fingertip trailing
to touch your face
and in that rushing moment
when his fingers melt your cheek
you can only smile
and smile
and smile.

Becky Hinshaw
there." 

2:30 in the morning, Abel suddenly woke with a scream. He had broken out in a cold sweat and lay in bed shivering. His mother.

"He was fast asleep.

bed. The sheets were clean and soft as Abel pulled them over him and moved sideways towards the center of his bed. In no time

plates. After rinsing their dishes, Abel and Evelyn made their way through the dining room and the TV room, then they open-

her before-bed ritual which involved donning a hairnet and applying facial cream. After this procedure was complete she retired

goodnight and got ready for bed. As Abel brushed his teeth he recognized the slightly rusty flavour of the water, which gave

drafty, musty smelling stairway and creaked up the bare wooden stairs. In the hallway, they kissed each other

through the most recent issue of National Geographic, while Evelyn continued her novel.

voluptuous easy chair. They shared brief snatches of conversation and then became absorbed in their readings. Abel thumbed

out a bottle of "Miller's" she had bought for his homecoming.

a sharp contrast with the charcoal grey sky, and dark green pine and spruce. He took long strides and reached his driveway in

grazing to look up at Abel and continued to graze leisurely on the thick, rich, grass. In an adjacent field, Hiram's cows lay on a

It wasn't long before the whole room was bathed in clean white light. Abel was well rested. It seemed as though an

time that you can sleep in tomorrow and I'll fix you some blueberry pan-

leisurely so he decided that he ought to take a drive into Blue Hill, stopping at Sylvester's Gulf Station along the way.

"Is it okay if I borrow the car to go into town, Mom? I figured I'd stop at Sylvester's along the way and ask about work.

"Of course, Honey. That sounds like a fine idea. Do you suppose you could pick up a jar of face cream for me at

Richardson's?"

to the clearing in the woods out back. They are fairly well seasoned and would make good fire wood."

"It's beautiful as always down on the point. It looks as though Hiram just put in a new bed of flowers by his front por-

"Did you have a nice walk dear?" Evelyn said.

"Good!" Evelyn replied. "You don't know how good it makes me feel to have a man around the house again."

"I know, Ma. It's just that with all this thunder and lightning I must have thought, for a moment, that I was still b-

"Oh, Honey, are you Okay?!

"O.K. Ma."

"Come on, Honey. You ought to go up and get some rest. You can sleep in tomorrow and I'll fix you some blueberry pan-

Mr. Richardson, as he whisked past Evelyn on his way to the door. Presently, he could see the ocean if he looked down to the right, and pine trees further on the horizon. On the left he could see the Bar Harbor Hotel. It was still quite early, and he

a jar of face cream for ma at

the car started right up and Abel rolled slowly down the sea shell covered driveway. He headed up the point road and took a right towards Blue Hill, passing in the process, the small, town center of Brooklin with its General Store, Post Office and Fire and Police Station. The gentle road continued for a long stretch and finally wound its way around where Sylvester's Gulf station was situated. Here the road went up and down, in little dips, as far as the eye could see. On either side of the road were expanses of grassy meadow. The stacks of knee high grass moved work, with the wind. It was a scene that seemed much more appropriate to the plains of Kansas than Down East.

By the time he reached the bridge Abel had pulled off the road and walked up on the small embankment of the bridge. The roar of the water was

was bathed in clean white light. Abel was well rested. It seemed as though an evening had gone by since he had first woken up. After an invigorating shower, he made his way downstairs, to the kit-

Evelyn was standing over a grill while she dropped plump blueberries into pancakes with great diameters.

Evelyn read the ingredient list of the recipe in the can. She read it through twice, black, half-barrels on either side of the door, which served as planters for pink geraniums. The air outside was clean and

"Oh, I understand. Well try to get some sleep now. That's the best thing for you. I'll see you in the morning."

Bt at that, t

ers, and sawdust, and rubbed his eyes. He made his way to the kitchen, carrying their cups and

As Abel peeled them, the thundery sounds faded away in the distance, while the lightning flared up phosphorus. Around 2:30 in the morning, Abel suddenly woke with a scream. He had broken out in a cold sweat and lay in bed shivering. His mother.

"Oh, you noticed that, did you? He put that in about two and one-half weeks ago."

"Can I help you with anything Ma?"

"No, Honey. You just sit down at the kitchen table and relax."

She opened the door and flew into the kitchen, in her printed apron, inspecting the roast, baked potatoes and green be-

Due to Sylvester's tender care, the car started right up and Abel rolled slowly down the sea shell covered driveway. He headed up the point road and took a right towards Blue Hill, passing in the process, the small, town center of Brooklin with its General Store, Post Office and Fire and Police Station. The gentle road continued for a long stretch and finally wound its way around where Sylvester's Gulf station was situated. Here the road went up and down, in little dips, as far as the eye could see. On either side of the road were expanses of grassy meadow. The stacks of knee high grass moved

Within the silhouetted face of a witch and a cat on either side. The place had a cheerful aspect to it, due largely to the rose garden in the
to the tower, bright, yellow flowers in full bloom had bloomed across the field near the road. Hiram Lingley's bull paused in the
gazing to look at Abel and continued to graze leisurely on the thick, rich, grass. In an adjacent field, Hiram's cows lay on a

cap in the tower, bright, yellow flowers in full bloom had bloomed across the field near the road. Hiram Lingley's bull paused in the

The town of Blue Hill is the epitome of classic New England beauty. The small town clings to the hill above a rick rimmed

On his way out of the house, Abel closed the door with a loud click, and flicked on the lights. She was shocked to see her son in such condition. He lay in bed, wide-eyed with fright and his mother's purse and bid Evelyn good-bye. He walked down the hall and made his way out the side door. He walked between two

Mr. Richardson's.

It wasn't long before the whole room was bathed in clean white light. Abel was well rested. It seemed as though an

Evelyn turned off the lights and left the room. Abel lay in bed awake, but it wasn't long before sleep mer-

The sheets were clean and soft as Abel pulled them over him and moved sideways towards the center of his bed. In no time

At dawn, Abel was surprised to see in this swirling froth, a number of canoeists trying to successfully negotiate this extremely

Deafening. Abel was surprised to see in this swirling froth, a number of canoeists trying to successfully negotiate this extremely

chips. In an adjacent field, Hiram's cows lay on a

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"There really isn't much to do, Dear; Jason Lingley mowed the lawn recently. However, there are some trees that have

"Honey, are you Okay?"

"Don't worry, Mom. I just had a nightmare."

Animal's, selected and formally inspected.

The door to the drafty, musty smelling stairway and creaked up the bare wooden stairs. In the hallway, they kissed each other

"O.K. Ma."

"Come on, Honey. You ought to go up and get some rest. You can sleep in tomorrow and I'll fix you some blueberry pan-

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Mr. Richardson's.

After making their way downstairs, the Abels parted ways. The thunder sounded too far away in the distance, while the lightning flared up phosphorus. Around 2:30 in the morning, Abel suddenly woke with a scream. He had broken out in a cold sweat and lay in bed shivering. His mother.

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Deafening. Abel was surprised to see in this swirling froth, a number of canoeists trying to successfully navigate this extremely
He placed his hand on the thick brass handle and pulled open the bright red door. At first, Mrs. Lindsey had difficulty recognizing him, but then she came out from behind the counter, where she had been polishing a brass lantern, arms outstretched. She gave Abel a big hug and proceeded to interrogate him as to his state of affairs. He responded cordially to her volley of questions and added with affection that he hoped she might stop by sometime soon.

"I'm sorry I can't stay and talk with you longer," Abel said, "but I promised Mom I would get some work done around the house.

"Good for you," Mrs. Lindsey said. "I'm glad you stopped by. Take care and give my best to Evelyn.

"Sure thing," Abel said.

Once again Abel stepped out into the sun, and after a brief stroll along the wharf, accompanied by wheeling, screeching gulls, he made his way to the car and drove to Sylvester's. Sylvia was a bear of a man. When he saw Abel pull up from the car he was slouched over, gave his hands a quick wipe, and lumbered over to Abel. He extended a huge gruey paw to Abel while swiping him on the shoulder with his other hand at the same time.

"Well goddam my eyes if you hasn't grown, young Abel! You look to be in fine shape."

"Thank you, sir," Abel replied. "I was wondering if you couldn't use me to help around the station some this year."

"Oh, I'll tell you, Abel," Sylvia replied, "I'm looking into getting a horse for you to cut up some of the dead trees."

After a brisk drive home, Abel ate a quick luncheon of sandwiches and milk, which his mother served, and he was ready to begin work.

From the barn he took a fairly large "D" shaped logging saw, a splintering mat and a light Hudson Bay crusion axe. With these tools in hand he walked around the side of the barn, which was covered with moths, took back his back. He made his way to the tree house and saw that Jason Lingley had also put sheets of greased aluminum around the trunks of the small trees, which stood as a form, bordering the fallen trees in the clearing. Abel started to work. The purpose of these greased strips of metal was to prevent porcupines from climbing into the upper branches and eating the tender twigs. He walked past the lawn's metal was to prevent porcupines from climbing into the upper branches and eating the tender twigs. He walked past the lawn's large longitudinal cracks that split the granite. He paddled along this fragile landscape and set down his tools. He then rolled up the sleeves of his work shirt and picked up the saw. Then he went about sawing the trees into manageable lengths for splitting. At the same time, little Joey Hathaway, who was around six years old, and his playmate from down the road; Gordon Parsons, tore out of the Hathaway house for a quick stop at the store. They both came upon Abel and Evelyn in the walk and started to talk to the two of them. When the door opened, it appeared as though the great white house had swallowed her up.

After a brisk drive home, Abel ate a quick luncheon of sandwiches and milk, which his mother served, and he was ready to begin work.

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The Coming Age

I would be a witch —
apple in an eye that I am —
practicing birth control and
beckoning hallucinogens from weeds.
I need no virgin sterilization.
I am cleansed body and soul together
showering with the plants I sing to,
Naked before thirsty stamen —
no harm done in brushing with a bush.
I am Eve
and in this age
I'm claiming my garden

— Lynn Greene

Seduction

Sleek body twined about my feet.
Nose, head, then tail rub against my shins.
With what have you marked me?
Ebony animal,
Warlock what have you done to my heart it burns!
Warm body slither into my lap,
Drawing caresses from me with incantations.
Ah, your back arches with the tempo of my strokes.
Cat,
Why do you squirm from my lap?

— Jacqueline Ondy

Pointless Polarities

She searched for food to live
He lived on food for thought
She said we must fight
to live or die
He asserted life is round
no beginning, no end.
He calls the crowd to march
for peace
She crawls into a hole
with a gun.

It begins.
Two children die in the heat
of their quarrel.

— Ruth Wick

The Ladies from the Fairmont Unitarian Church Poverty Relief Fund

The good samaritan box
is painted brown and orange,
and is brought out once a year
for the cans drive —
cans don't spoil.
All the members of the congregation,
carry bags filled with fruit cocktail, yams
and cranberry sauce - fit for the holiday spirit
but enough for eight nourishing meals.
After the sermon they come forward with their gifts,
like gladbag wise men,
trying to ignore the runaway bartlett pears
rolling back down the aisle.
The ladies from the Fairmont Unitarian Church Poverty Relief Fund
deliver their poor people's thanksgiving day turkeys
on the friday after.
Filling their station wagons
they drive to where the needy live.
The ladies from the Fairmont Unitarian church Poverty Relief Fund
are disappointed.
They thought the poor
were always at home.

— Sharon S. McCartney

Confessions of a Book Burner

It started out so simply - a single page torn and removed and set afire. Quickly the blaze would then settle into
embers of ashes and dust.
So brief, so brilliant, so consuming - the elimination of words, thoughts and ideas through the cleansing purity of fire.
I work in a library reshelving books. Late at night I burn a few of the oldest volumes I can find in the furnace
down in the coal cellar.
The old leather-bound classics burn the best. They burn the brightest because of their thin brittle pages. But
they also burn the longest because of their thick leather coverings.
I'll never forget the joy and exhilaration I felt when I burned my first dictionary. The entire English vocabulary reduced to the purity of yellow flame.
People die and turn to dust just as their recorded words must turn to dust and blazing embers.
Damned idealists, damned intellectuals, may your works die and burn in hell.
Your glorified works are but spiderwebbed collections of musty rotting paper.
I burn them nightly with joy in the darkened coal cellar of the library.

— A. Acker
It became time for the Congress of Gods, and gods from all corners of heaven came along the Milky Way toward the terrace, illuminated by Gods of House, which is right next to the Andromeda Galaxy, the first turn to the left, and there it is, a large house on your right hand.

It was an important Congress coming up. The first item on the agenda was namely the question of whose fault World War was this war. The first Congress after the end of the war, because there is, as you all know, no hurry out there in the universe to finish Congress because some wild tribe of Bechuanaland believed in him (one has to have at least 10,000 votes to become a god with a seat in the Congress) held everybody welcome. Right thereafter Buddha demanded the floor.

— The Christian party has again proved itself unworthy of the confidence it enjoys among voters by letting a World War break out. Is it negligence, or is it general incompetence, or does My Lord (he took off one of his shoes, hit it on the table and pointed it at the God of Christianity) does My Lord think it is the thing it should be? Don't you, My Lord don't take care of his job. We demand an explanation and a guarantee it doesn't happen again! Otherwise we will use all our resources to mission you off the surface of the heavens!

General mutterings of approval and scattered applause. The attacked Lord looked wrathful (although good and forgiving the same time of course). Buddha's plump face regained its usual content wrinkles, and he sat down with his hands crossed long over the house.

— Your Honor, Gentlemen! It is not my fault! It is not my fault! How could I know it would end that way? This guy wasn't really any ungodly fellow from which one could see in the beginning, and wasn't Mussadini a pretty nice dude to, or so he himself said, or his own pope in Rome said. What is one supposed to believe? (He began to lose his temper—it takes a while for gods, but once it comes, it doesn't go away.) And by the way, what do you really expect? How in heaven's name can I be all over and everywhere? One must trust one's own work, one's own work, one's own work! One and only one is good enough! And even not a computer to keep count of all the souls

No, no, one is supposed to remember them! Who do you think I am? A magician? You Gents can go home and mind your own business, because I can't stand any criticism. If one is already, then one is, one is, to Hell! God be kind, heaven be kind!

The mood was now quite grated among the Princes of Peace.

— Shame on you! And another thing: what is My Lord doing in South Africa? Aren't all people supposed to be equal, in that to part of our post-war-program?

Our Lord talked the tone somewhat.

— Yes, yes, that's none of my business. Africa is almost a Christian colony, in the periphery, you know, so I let them mind their own business. But I don't eat their oranges, I really don't!

The Speaker cleared his voice.

— Would the congress agree that we can write off the Second World War on our Christian brother's account, because, after all, his followers were the ones who began it?

Everyone voted yes, except for Our Lord, who voted "don't know".

The speaker stood up with a serious look on his face.

— My Christian Lord! I have the honor to inform you that there now are ten major wars on your account since you last did something.

— Your Honor, Gentlemen! The Christian party has again proved itself unworthy of the confidence it enjoys among the Christians, the inexorable depths of his bag rewriting Carthage Elementary mythology. Rumors spread of the rarely glimpsed Carthage Elementary, the име вода in his pocket, then every ten meters, and they appeared to be right.

Jeezum Crow!

— My Lord, you know what this means. You have to pay up again. This time, you jump on one leg and crow like a rooster ata least a hundred times.

— Brav-o a voice from the congregation exclaimed.

Our Lord stood up, in grief, pulled up his gowns which was hanging all the way down to his feet, stood up on one leg, and staggered to jump and crow, at first hesitantly, then with more zeal.

Buddha slapped his knees and yelled of laughter. A South American Indian god was caught in ecstasy of laughter and scalped himself, rolling around on the floor. The heaven was filled with a roar of laughter, so that the stars were flashing and the satellites feel down.

When Our Lord had finished jumping and crowing, the congregation broke up, and the gods went back home, each to his own. Buddha left the Congress with the words: —I haven't had this much fun since the Trojan war when Zeus had to stand up and say "I'm a shithead! I'm a shithead!"

Thereafter everything was, as usual, quiet in the heavens.

The Congress of the Gods

This story was originally published in a book called Book, written by Tage Danielsson.

Translated by Ari Kohto.

Marble Bags

Dot had her usual hard time finding first gear as she swung the old bus around; fighting with the clutch, she watched her fingers (apart from the trading post porch and then come up scant inches short of an out-thrust pine trunk on the other side of the street at J- Ursulla Albers kissed her seven year old daughter Helga on the mouth, but couldn't catch Rudy, a year older, before he scrambled onto the bus. Ursulla straightened, patting a bothersome whisk of her long blonde hair back into place, trying to reposition it where it had slipped behind her tight bun. A blue wool suit covered her naked feet. Helga labored up the steps in her dirndl and slippers, with a tiny rucksack slung on her shoulder. She flinched as she met the staring hungry eyes of a boy, maybe thirteen years old, that refused to be averted, filling her with deep unflinching longing. As the bus turned its back on her, a dozen pale faces were frozen in the rear window. She put the light in her mouth?

"Yes, yes, but that's none of my business. Africa is almost a Christian colony, in the periphery, you know, so I let them mind their own business. But I don't eat their oranges, I really don't!"

"Jeezum Crow!"

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window. They watched her turn and followed the progress of her long, slender legs returning up the drive to her house.

Rudy plowed down the aisle, then felt an iron clamp on his bicep and he was being pulled forcibly into a seat with Jimmy Thibeau, a monstrous bovine creature, and Joe Michaud, a short, wiry seventh grader with thick glasses and a hoarse voice.

"Howya doin', Hymie?" Joe bellowed into Rudy's startled face. Rudy gagged at the older boy's foul breath, which transmitted a trace of tooth polish, or even food for that matter, but which radiated a hot blast of staleness like when Rudy's electric transformer overheated. Joe smashed Rudy up against the massive thighs of Jimmy Thibeau, who grinned foolishly next to his window. Jimmy wrapped his massive left arm around Rudy and bearhugged the little boy into his lap, rasping his knuckles across the blond scalp. Rudy could smell the manure of Thibeau's cows and Thibeau's own urine wafting from the denim encasing the folds of the older boys legs. Rudy played dead, suppressing tears, and Jimmy released him. He tried to ignore Joe, who asked him about the 'Nazzys' and tweaked him painfully on the earlobes until his whole head burned. Across the aisle, Dawson McCafferty, who was left destined to be a sheriff, saw Rudy's stifled heaving and wet eyes, and told Joe to leave the little Kraut alone. Dawson was big for his twelve years, bigger than Joe, but he bled and cried easily. Joe fixed his confused lens'blurred scowl on the beady, red face of propriety, and faked a jab at the fragile bulbous nose, which caused Dawson to flinch severely, and subsequently took the fight out of Joe. Joe looked around for support but found no following, even Jimmy Thibeau had gone back to staring out the window as the bus entered Carthage, so he amused himself by cleaning the dirt from his fingernails and flicking it on Rudy's corduroy trousers. Dawson bumbled off towards a misty burning sunset, Marshall McHero, confident he had saved from limb the little Kraut, the rich Kraut's son, the irrefutable link to the beautiful blonde, the very sight of whom made Walter Moyse clap his knees together, flap his thumb-in-armpit wings and crow heavenward with painful desperation.

Dot pulled the old bus, Macwahoc County #17, to a stop in front of Carthage Elementary, a shambling brick and board edifice that entombed six hundred students on any given school day it didn't snow. Dot paid no attention as her charges were absorbed into the milling children waiting for the first bell, most vanishing quickly in the drab whirl of overcoats and wool hats pulled over eyebrows; others, like Walter Moyse, advanced with a cautious swagger into the throng, one weary eye peeled for any strutting roosters with bigger bags swinging from their hips.

Mike August

Monsters

He learned the fear
from fascination — spinning,
spinning past the inner threshold
warm then cold going
around
once more.

The mother with her three bags
from other stores and
seven more gifts to buy and
only fourteen shopping days left
pivoted.
"If you do that again I'll!"
A threat is enough
to avoid the blades of glass and steel.

Keeping fingers in tight fists,
gingerly pressing the handle,
he learned to jump out quickly — looking back
as the monster flapped metallic arms
around
once more.

Sharon S. McCartney

Uction

Dispelled, I blink
And the spiral cactus I squeeze
For cuts and burns in the kitchen
Shocks the air.

I dream I smolder as the wheel of winter
Grinds the sorrel straw. Spindles wind
A gauze between the trees and clatter
as the pour of the sea.

In the predicament of an accused witch,
Your mouth intoxicates like pure dew,
The resinous poppy bulbs of light's traces.

The cycles of lore about you now
Quickens like the night. How dense
In this high forest! The boughs, like your hands,
Hummer and chant. Only your form is constant.

Our tongues stumble in a dark castle,
The shadows cast on the expanse of a grey wall
Flicker like skirts we wear.
We dance along tile snakes and horse hoof flames.
In layers, we pulse on the cathedral ceiling.
You wear gold around your strong arms
And the amulet of the chained basement.

The oil of your touch is the unction.
Like crushed pearls, sandlewood,
Or the fingernail of the half-moon,
You reach me by balms,
The syrup of darkness
Over the sharp seconds of your absence.

Bruce Leonard

Dust of Allah

Ghosts of Persian rugs
haunt our floor
with the
dust of Allah.

They dwell with
the harmony of dirt cloths
and congregate
under the wrath of my broom.

A. Acker
Buffalo Mountain

It has snowed on Buffalo Mountain.
The ancient matron's face has been changed in her sleep.
The wrinkles of her jaw and forehead are covered with a porcelain that rounds out her sides giving her unseasonal youth.
The dwellers at her hem discover the morning oddity last.
Those passing through remark, "snow in summer, of all things."
Pasting bumperstickers on their howard johnson cars they drive on liking the postcard version better.
Those who stay, wonder out loud, wonder how deep, how much, how long it will last.
And as if mountain wise, shake their heads knowingly — rocky weather.
Hoping the run off will fill the reservoir.
Yet above them the coiled lady stands stolid, bearing a welcome burden that muffles the sounds from below.
And knows that few will wish to climb in the cold weather.

Sharon S. McCartney

Experience

When you've risen before the sun
Burns droplets from the stalks,
And paced across frigid planks
To stoke Survival.

When you've gathered milk
From a fist of warm flesh,
Pumped the shivering steel
For a crisp gulp of water,
And splintered logs
With a rusted tool
Between throbbing hands
So that you might eat.

When you've leaned heavily
On those you hardly know,
Acquired full boots of snow
Trudging a heaped sled of supplies,
Trekked miles after midnight
To embrace the day's slumber.

When you've trod deeply in my footprints,
You may clench my heart
and voice what you feel
Between your tingling fingers.

Barry Pailet

The Wings

When I woke this morning
It was no longer dark
I susused and stretched
I began to scan the room
with my tired eyes
I stopped at the chair
where the punch bowl sat
and then I remembered
trying not to think
about what happened
I got up to dress
when I shook my shoulders
I could feel my wings
beating against my back
I was surprised that
I still had them
I stood on the chair
and looked into the mirror
expecting to see them
covered with ashes
or stained with blood
but they were snow white

Leonora M. Cravotta
Dr. Frankenstein was a man of supernatural qualities. He was a statistician at the National Bureau of Standards and con-}
{
jured effortlessly forth statistical symbols - small blue men with mystic meaning; sometimes the little man contained all at}
{
the case it was accompanied by another little man representing all Americans voting for the Republicans, in such a way
{
that I could not have any head. So you see, Dr. Frankenstein really was some kind of sorcerer!
{
Dr. Frankenstein had for a long time kept hidden in his most secret and sheltered laboratory where he had been punching
{
with mystical tables and magical formulas. He had for a long time been occupied with nothing less than the culmination of
{
life's work: to scientifically create a statistical man in natural size. Meticulously he mixed all the statistical facts about the
{
American man in exact proportions, poured them into test-tubes and retorts, stirred, decocted the mixture, and processed
{
in another test-tube he had a maize liquid, made up of all the statistically computed qualities and characteristics of the
{
American man.}
{
"Now when I drop this liquid into the eye of the man, he should according to all calculations become alive, from a statistical
{
point of view," Dr. Frankenstein hissed in a voice muffled by ardor.
{
He dropped. The figure sat up with a drowsy look on his face.
{
"How are you doing?", the figure said.
{
"All works!" Dr. Frankenstein exclaimed. "Phrases with high statistical frequency are consequently the first ones to be ut-
{
tered!"
{
"Well, bottoms up!", the figure said.

Dr. Frankenstein called his creature Paul-Ernest Average (PEA). Paul-Ernest was a man of medium height, with normal
{
physique, brown hair, and a slightly sloped walk. He was wearing a medium gray cheviot suit, a striped tie, and rather ap-
{
polished shoes. He was fairly nice, quiet, secure, and 49% Democrat. He liked football and the Benny Hill Show, and every
{
other Sunday he went to Church.
{
Dr. Frankenstein now took Paul-Ernest Average to his normal house with three bedrooms and one and a half garage, which
{
had been prepared in advance in connection to Dr. Frankenstein's laboratory at the National Bureau of Standards. Paul-Er-
{
nest Average immediately sat down in the armchair in front of the TV-set and smoked one and one third filter cigarettes.
{
"Now, let's get some things straight, Paul-Ernest" Dr. Frankenstein said. "I have created you out of all the means am-
{
Dicine of Average Precipitation in Lombardia (ISTDAPL),
{
Static of America.
{
the United States of America.
{
Understand me, Mr. and Mrs. Average behaved
{
"See you later, alligator" Paul-Ernest said.

After a few months, Dr. Frankenstein noticed a certain unrest in Paul-Ernest Average, which seemed to be more serious
{
progress for the Determination of Average Precipitation in Lombardia (ISTDAPL), which was held in Tokyo.
{
Now Paul-Ernest saw his chance. Over time, he had grown more and more frustrated with all the decimals and fractions he
{
was constructed to live after. Dr. Frankenstein was caught in his own trap: he had not considered certain facts pertaining to nor-
{
moral human reactions versus statistical patterns of behavior. If one is intimate with one's wife 0.21 times a day, as Paul-Ernest for-
{
the first time had been statistical proof indicates that one finally becomes rather frustrated.
{
This was why Paul-Ernest now rebelled against the decimals in his life. He began a Saturday night at 8 o'clock not by wat-
{
ting 2.6 hours of television but instead by drinking two whole beers (compared to the dictated 1.37). Thereafter he made love
{
his wife two whole times (an increase of 1.79 times!), took a whole bath (compared to the usual one third), smoked two pipes
{
of Dunhill (instead of the three Marlboros) and finally went to bed without a pajama (not the prescribed 0.75 pajama).
{
He felt rather good by the time he fell asleep.
{
The behavior of Paul-Ernest Average turned out to have unforeseeable consequences for the patterns of behavior for all other
{
Americans, because Paul-Ernest was the national standard for all American life. TV polls showed all time lows, the consump-
{
tion of beer increased so much that AAA had to call an emergency meeting in Boise, Idaho, sales of prophylactics boomed, and
{
pipe smoking, bathing and sleeping naked experienced a renaissance. And when Paul-Ernest decided not to go to work the
{
following Monday, the production of the country stopped as if by a stroke of magic. So much loafoing around has never before
{
been seen in the United States of America.

When Dr. Frankenstein came home from Tokyo he was, as statistical evidence shows most people would be, in dismay.
{
What should he do? He could not well dispose of the Averages, because that would do it for the whole American population.
{
He could hardly even quarrel with Paul-Ernest Average, because that would mean running the risk of provoking him, and thus
{
all American men, to anger. And one knows what an angry American might do, not to talk about what 75 million could cause!

"Tell me, what do you want?" he said mildly.
{
"Just whole numbers" Paul-Ernest replied. "No decimals, just whole numbers. Rounded off to the nearest larger integer.
{
Shovel"
{
So if you feel like having another drink before bedtime, remember that it is thanks to Paul-Ernest Average.

Shaking Heads in Copley Square

Three.
{}
Three piece and pin-striped vested

Minds left their lunch to

Frown.
{}
Frown

Upon roller-footed youth skating and be-bopping to

Funk music spilling their fluid joy into the

Bricked square unaware they were being

Jigged.
{}
Jigged

Back and forth by arrogant eyes which

Then

Snuggled back to the news

Content.
{}
Uncontent

I

Frowned

And

Jigged

The

Three.

Gregor Macdonald
Cornpoem

They came to cut the corn this morning,
only the rain could stop them.
international harvester teeth
razor sharp
stalking
stopped
by the grey clouds and northwesterlies
spitting on the open-cabbed driver.

At noon the sun broke free.
the sturdy ford tractor
freshly painted barnyard-strutting firetruck red body
perched insect-like
between firestones girding corn yellow hubs
('Maize yellow,' the t.v. indian corrects me)
trundled throatily
back to the aborted morning cut.

Jumpsuited khaki and pennzoil dark
Sutton's boy
flapjacketed and coffeed
jumped off the ford
fastening the umbilical cord
expectant
to funnel the tall thin rows
into the knives and rollers
to strip and squeeze the ears
from the fibrous waste of pale gold wrappings
frosted brittle-
the hard ears thump dully
into the hound-faithful trailer.

Working outside in,
Sutton pauses
only to hitch another trailer to his train-
the golden square thins before his blades
leaving trampled husks,
muddy silk.
Save overlooked cobs
and stubs of stalks once tractor high,
the corn is gone
when Gilligan's Island comes on at four.

Mike Augusta