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Wondering of an Adopted Son

Andy Heckert
Denison University

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Wonderings of an Adopted Son

Fifteen, and she was experimenting,
Testing torrid emotions
New to her rapidly changing body.
And the crushing answer,
Found in her swelling belly,
Was the other metamorphosis,
As she discovered just how much free love costs.

Or was she the weary peasant,
Squatting to deliver me,
The bakers' dozenth?
And enough was enough,
And too many too much.

Was my infantile form pulled
From the tattered ribbons of a body demolished,
Straining to hold together for the instant
That completed the sacrifice?
Some sparkling shred of human willpower
Bringing in a soul to replace that
Which left the world by way of the guard rail.

It could have been the greasy whore,
Sweating on a mildewed mattress.
While the myopic clerk
Drags belly past bloated belly,
And dreams of Miss September.

Which then raises the question:
Who was the other half,
And does he know what he has forgotten?

Is this father his party's rising champion?
Leaping awake at night,
Lying to his wife about the nightmares,
The visions of the jackal reporters
Tracing that curious affair,
Discovering its desperately concealed product,
And, blood test in hand, swarming to the kill.

Perhaps he is entombed,
Buried in the twisted wreckage
Of a Phantom jet long since burned.
Washed away in endless acres of dark,
Steaming rainforest.
And never knowing of the boy
His cheerleader widow carried.

It was the axe man,
On a Friday after the slaughterhouse,
His shoulders weary of work,
And his meager pay dissolved,
In a three dollar bottle of wine
And a wilted bouquet.

The child who could not be loved
Observes the parental parade,
Guiltily content to have avoided
The characters whose blood he shares.

—Andy Heckert '93



Holly Aikens