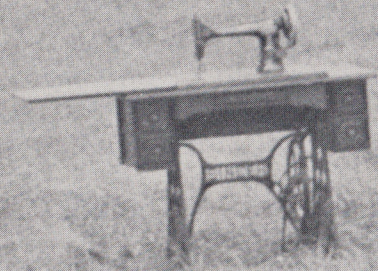


S O W E R
1982



DANA COLLEGE LIBRARY

SOWER



Sower of inland plains:
fling the whistling seed
against lusty spring winds;
thrusting it
into the humid earth-womb.

Sower of winged words:
rising before dawn,
swinging your arm over the world,
release your thought
into the lash and roar of winds,
send your seed singing
into the westering night.

SOWER 1982

Volume XXXVII

Editor Jennifer J. Jensen

Assistant Editor Suzanne Lazzaro

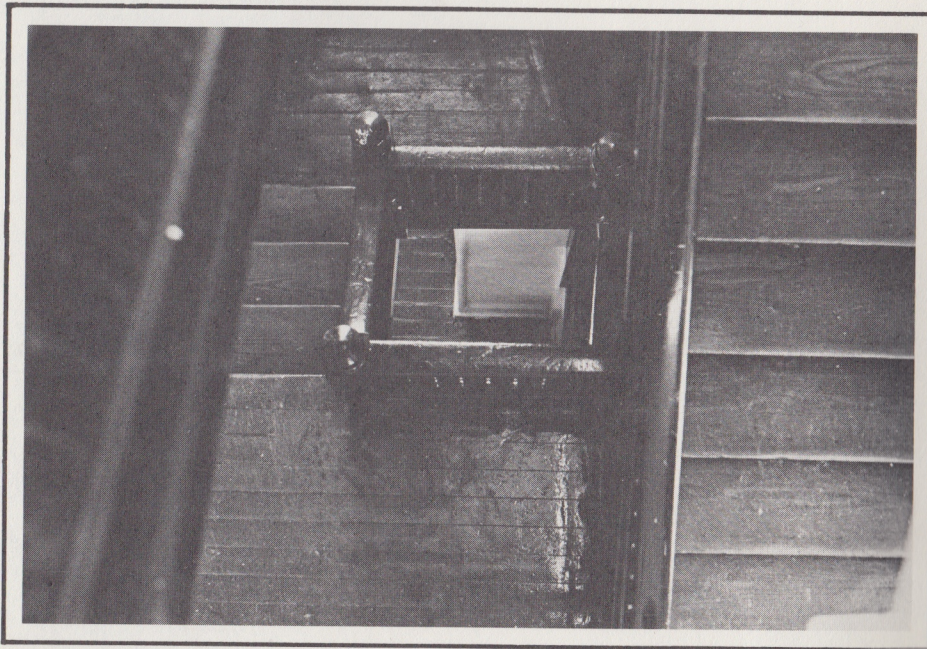
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PREFACE

Mankind and Nature have a unique and harmonious existence at Dana College. The poetry and the contributors included in this work are even yet steeped in a great pioneer tradition built from an understanding between Man and Nature.

The beauties and realities of Nature have inspired many a poet, writer, artist, and photographer. The discords and harmonies between Man and Nature, Man and his Kind, and Man and Himself are found within this work. Read . . . Interpret . . . Learn . . . Love . . .

Jennifer J. Jensen
1982 Sower Editor

The ragged weed and the imperfect flower
Speak of perfection. Oh that they
Could teach my mind.
The heart of darkness in the eye of day.

From "The Ragged Weed"
By **Joseph Langland**

1982 LITERARY AWARDS

Joseph Langland Award for Poetry

Soeur/Frere/Soeur . . . Suzanne Lazzaro

Joseph Langland Award for Prose

Fruit of the Vine . . . Suzanne Lazzaro

Kay Munk Award for Translation

One Day . . . Karen Kruetzian

FRUIT OF THE VINE

I twisted the red, white and blue plastic of the straw around and around in my mouth, holding on tightly with my right set of eye teeth. I sucked what little bit of Squirt would pass through the flattened straw, and patted myself on the back for making it through another school year to another summer. It was only the first day of another summer, but I was bored to tears already, as Mom was sure to point out. She was always doing that lately, describing exactly how I felt. It drove me bananas. I pulled a long thread from the edge of my cutoffs, and then another, making a game out of trying to make each pulled thread longer than the last. After I'd succeeded in fringing about an inch of the bottom of my already-too-short-shorts, I shoved the straw into the drainage hole on the wooden step of our front porch, and slammed through the screen door onto the sunporch, my thongs looped around my fingers.

I looked at my watch, which I intended to wear all summer so I'd have an untanned watch spot to prove to skeptics that I did get a nice shade of Malibu over the summer. It was only one o'clock, and Andrea wouldn't be out of school until three-thirty. Andrea lived down the block. She went to the Catholic school down on Andrews and School Streets. St. Pat's didn't let out until two weeks after the city schools and didn't start until two weeks after the city schools in the fall. The way Andrea and I had it figured, between the city and Father Costello, we were cheated out of a whole month of glorious summer together.

I pressed my nose against the screen of the sun porch. I knew that my nose would have a little checkerboard on it, and Mom would say I was going to break out if I didn't keep my face clean. From the way I saw it, now that I was thirteen, I was going to break out no matter what, so I might as well have the pleasure of pressing my nose against the screen, or anything else I felt like pressing my nose against. Mom would say I was being ornery. I would say I was honest, but only to myself. Mom wouldn't appreciate that kind of honesty.

"Schnicklefritz?" It was Grandpa. What did he want? I just felt like pouting and feeling sorry for myself.

"Schnicklefritz, what are you doing out here all alone?" Couldn't he see that I was lonely and that I wanted to be left alone? That probably wouldn't have made sense to Grandpa. "Schnicklefritz, I'm going to buy my tomato plants, do you want to come with me? You used to, when you were little."

Oh man. I didn't feel like going into greenhouses all afternoon with Grandpa. It took him forever to find just the right plants. But what could I do? "Sure, Grandpa, I'll go. Let me get my tennis shoes on." I knew Mom wouldn't let me out of the house without regular shoes on. The thongs wouldn't make it.

We went out to Grandpa's '59 Chevy. I liked this old car, especially the black, wingy things on the back fenders. I grabbed a gray shop rag out of the back seat so I would have something on the car seat between the hot leather and my bare legs. We sat in the car a minute to wait for the neighbor lady, Mrs. Toots, to walk her four poodles past the driveway. Those four dogs were the reason Grandpa called Mrs. Toots "The Dog Lady", and it seemed very logical to Grandpa. He never thought that other people might think he was referring to Mrs. Toots' looks.

Grandpa was like that. He just said what made sense to him and that was that. No one could convince him otherwise. Mom said I was like Grandpa in that way. I couldn't quite see it, but I didn't mind the comparison. There had always been something special between Grandpa and me. I never knew exactly what it was, but we both felt it, especially now that Mom and I were living with Grandma and Grandpa. We moved in right after Mom and my father got their divorce. Grandpa got to me sometimes, though. I guess it was because he always saw through me. When I was with Grandpa, I was seven again, holding onto his hand at the Shrine Circus, or at Marshall Field's in Chicago. I was still his Schnicklefritz.

We went to the first greenhouse. "I don't like this old Swede," Grandpa confided in me, "but you just never know. You've got to check all the stores before you buy your tomato plants. It just ain't worth bothering with 'em otherwise, if you don't get the best ones." How did Grandpa choose the best? He tried to explain: "You just need to get a feel for them. I don't know what else to call it. You just know the right ones."

Tomatoes were a ritual with Grandpa. I knew his sequence as well as he did, after being his shadow for thirteen years.

Buy the best, coddle them in the garage for two or three days to "undo all the damage those florists do to them," meanwhile keeping the car out overnight so the carbon monoxide didn't kill the plants. Then, planting at night so the tomato plants could "settle in" before they had to contend with the noon sun, and the nightly waterings, in themselves a devotional, with an hour's worth of fine, fine mist for the small plot of ground on the west side of the garage. The stakes must be put in at the proper time, and the tomatoes must be just the right shade of blush before we picked them so they would ripen after exactly one day in the kitchen window. Even eating tomatoes had its do's and don't's. Sliced tomatoes were only to be eaten at dinner. Any other time, it was salt shaker in one hand and tomato in the other, to be eaten like an apple.

We went to every greenhouse on our side of town. Grandpa knew the owner of every shop and what kind of a businessman each one was. Finally, he had to decide which plants to get for this year's crop. As I wondered which greenhouse would get Grandpa's business this year, a smile came over his face. He turned the car into the A&W parking lot and ordered us each a root beer. I noticed that it was about three o'clock, and Andrea would be getting out of school soon, so I was anxious to get home. The carhop hung our tray of frosted mugs on the window that Grandpa had rolled a third of the way up. He handed me a root beer. "Well, Schnicklefritz," he started, "Which ones do you think we should get?"

"Me?" I couldn't imagine Grandpa really needing my opinion on tomatoes.

But Grandpa just laughed. "I don't see anyone else I could be talking to. You've been at this tomato business with me since you were as tall as a tomato stake. If you don't know by now . . . Which do you think?"

I just looked at Grandpa for a long time. He wasn't kidding. But tomatoes were serious business with Grandpa. He couldn't want me to choose his plants for a whole summer's work. Grandpa knew why I was stalling. I took a deep breath. I didn't have a feel for which ones they were, which ones were

just right for this summer's plants. What if I was wrong, and they died? What would Grandpa do all summer? Suddenly, tomato plants seemed very important. I had to be right. I breathed deeply again, and I took a drink of root beer and slowly licked the foam off my upper lip. "The ones at Armaretti's. The ones with the medium stalks, and narrow leaves."

We went back to Armaretti's and loaded several flats of tomato plants into the car, setting them on the floor in the back seat, and a tray between my feet in the front. They looked pretty good, I thought, but I still wasn't sure. When we got home and put the plants in their garage hospital for their recuperation, I got brave. "Which ones did you think, Grandpa?"

"I couldn't decide between these and the old Swede's," Grandpa told me. "Besides, I've had something to keep me busy each summer for forty years. It's your turn to worry now."

I smiled at him, knowing I'd have someone to worry with me.

Suzanne Lazzaro

One Day . . .

One day
the father will take his son by the hand
and walk through glass-glazed streets
to stand before a shop window
filled with mechanical toys
maybe he will take the express train
and, amid the rhythm of electronic music,
in a small cafe,
enjoy synthetic sustenance,
the rainbow colored foam
of uncertain substances.
Strangely motivated by foreign poisons in his blood,
he and his son
will leave the cafe
and walk through the dustless, glass-glazed streets
to a building
from whose revolving doors
blows the breath of a thousand years.
He will guide his son,
showing him this and that,
and finally
point to a glass case (Do not touch)
Look, my son. A tree . . .

**from the German of Ilona Bodden
translated by Karen Kreutzian**

Of Chimes Unheeded

Single notes of music,
Scythed and sliced belly-open,
Lie bleeding in wretched yawning agony.
Philistines!
What can you say,
Or what do you even know,
Of a hairs-breadth pain
Or the dullrust razor at the throat?
When have you ever stopped,
Buried in the day as you are,
To listen to the bells at quarter-hour
As they strive to wrench your blood-encrusted eyes
To heaven?
The bells know futility,
Drink from filthy little souls
All the filthy little lies
They can hold
And die.

Scott Carrier

CHANSON D'AUTOMNE

The lengthy sobs
Of the violins
Of autumn
Wound my heart
With their dull
Monotone.
All suffering
And pale, when
The hour tolls,
I remember
The old days
And I weep.
And I depart
On an ill wind
That carries me away
On this side, beyond
Like the
Dead leaves.

**—from the French of Paul Verlaine
translated by Suzanne Lazzaro**

Movements

Turn your eyes inward,
Follow the flight of the soul.
Chase it down the corridors of self,
Watching where it flies
Trailing fear and electricity—
Until, safe upon the inner trails,
It stops to rest,
Weary from shock.
Circle behind,
Catch it unaware.
Grill it over a low flame
For ten minutes.
Add potato salad.
Serves one.

Scott Carrier

Alone

He stands there
Alone
In that familiar place
He looks around
Alone
At the familiar sights
But no one is left
They have all gone
It's not the same
Alone
The laughter is gone
The joy has disappeared
Only the memory remains
A fading memory
For no one is left
They have all gone
It's not the same
Alone

Paul Snow

There Isn't Much Money In Poetry

The flow of days,
Often too slow to stop and number,
Become staid, a thing of mighty impotence—
As if those very muscles
Which provide the innate strength
Serve as anchors,
Rooting to the soil
The power locked within
The frame of weeks,
The parcel of months.
The simple weariness
Of hour on hour,
Like water on rock,
Is devastatingly final.
That knowledge is secure,
Set down within the mind—
Yet not enough
To push desperation
To the point of action . . .

je suis fatigué

Scott Carrier

P.S.* (*PRISONERS OF SELF)

We huddle
shivering in the colddamp room,
heatless.
We swelter
temperatures rising quickly,
sultry.
Up, down,
High, low,
Pressure on.
The vacuum.
We whimper
escape pleas but to no avail.
We cry out
but the Answering One is
Out To Lunch.

Constant, the breeze outside seeks to unlatch the windows.

Suzanne Lazzaro

SOEUR/FRERE/SOEUR

The blood we share is the least.
We three,
surging through our veins,
have more than red.
We have green.
Printemps green of you,
Autumn green of me
have melded into summer, evergreen.
Verdant laughter
Emerald tears
have grown for us the grass of years,
have sown for us the wheat
that we now replant
 replant
 replant

For many new rows on rows of seedlings
have come since our harvest.
We are far-reaching fields apart,
yet roots intertwine beneath parental soil,
Holding us secure, with room to turn ourselves with the sun.
Joie de vivre, glistening in the sun.

Suzanne Lazzaro

INCONCINNITY

Opulence sings a fanfaronade at Lincoln Center
After checking her fur from Sax
All the time keeping an eye on those Tiffany diamonds
And "Oh My Dear, How Have You Been?"
while
crouched against a cold slab
 of unmaternal concrete wall on forty-second street
huddled over a fiery drum in the bowery
hugging tightly the worldly goods in twine-handled shopping bags
 and safety-deposit shoeboxes on fifth avenue
poverty hides in corners.

Suzanne Lazzaro

Conflagration

Fire pounds the walls of my brain,
Lights the rough inner surface,
Sheets it with a gold agony—
Rages through the different levels,
Scorches all my memories,
Leaving scarred charcoal corpses—
Upward toward the nursery
Where concepts,
Lined like infants in cotton cribs
Perish in their sleep—

Scott Carrier

Plastic Reality

Cardboard personality and
steel images are all I see.
Once this land was full
of real things called the human race.
Sure we had our problems;
we made mistakes in haste—
now all I see, where
valleys used to be green,
is iron beams, concrete
pillars and neon signs.
When I think what this
world used to be it boggles my mind.
What is this new concept
of throw-away people?
What happened to reality?
Now plastic faces are all I see.
My God man, I can't
let this happen to me.
We are all becoming the
mindless messes they show us on TV—
one day we will all
be dancing around in a trance
while mortality fixes in
place its last deadly lance.
Wake up before it starts
its advance.

Arthur L. Labs

a letter to my friend

Nov. 1978

listen to me and the words that I say
for your love will leave you at the end
of the day.

you can't play the field
when you don't know the game
don't try and love two
love is never the same.
the sneaking, the hurting,
the cheating, the lies,
when your two lovers meet
one of them dies.

you'll never forget it
the pain in his face.
the people, the words,
and always the place.

I hurt one love
so deep and so wide
I saw in his eyes
all the times I had lied.
I heard in his voice
the love he once felt
then before me that moment
I watched it all melt.

As he turned and walked
quickly away
my heart felt empty
what could I possibly say.
he had gone
I had sent him to rest
my mind remains unsure
did I love him the best.

sincerely,
d.d.s.

Denise Steenbock

Yawn of the Wrist

Leaping, spilling, jumping,
The flowing crimson flood
Pours forth, my heart still pumping
The river of my blood.

Scott Carrier

The Healing Process

Shuddering in the dark—
Elder blood lines passed her throat,
Soothed the sobbing veins with ice.
The shattered will, in so many pools
(quiet circles of determination)
Drew together, became as one.
The old ways are strength to her now,
A source of energy
Within the cooling night.
They are sustenance and protection,
A shelter and a veil.
The recovery progresses.

Scott Carrier

Remember Endymion

You can't keep me in your kitchen, your living room, or den.
You can't tuck me in the bedroom, or fold me away
with your linens
in the closet.
I won't stand for it!
For, I am no slave to a kitchen,
no urn to set on display in the corner of the living room,
no maestro to be heard within your den.
And, I am no marble statue
to epitomize
the feminine
mystique
in your bedroom,
nor a whore
to tuck, as a skeleton, into the closet.
I will not spend my days in toil—
cleaning, wiping—displaying you to others as a
"complete man"
(ego and superego fully developed).
I will, instead, fulfill my id.
that part of
me
which longs to play.

Celeste Hutton

THE SAGA OF THOR-KRUNCH THE FACE-SPLITTER

Translator's Note: Before there were adequate table manners or even the extensive use of personal hygiene in medieval Scandinavia, the rugged peoples of Iceland already had a thriving culture based on maiming, brutal bloodshed and murder. It was immensely successful, great fun and made for good reading.

At Krysvik there lived a man named Thor-Krunch the Face-Splitter. His father had been that Thorgeir Deer-Mangler who had been so derided for his unorthodox hunting style. Thor-Krunch was a much-respected man at the Althing whence he journeyed once a year with his two grown sons, Geir and Geir the Second. Thor-Krunch was a man of great imagination.

In the spring of that year, he readied his horses for the journey to the Althing. He and his sons rode off in good favor and each rode east armed with two doubled-edged swords, a dagger in their belt, three spears apiece on their backs, two clubs and a broad, double-edged ax each. For Thor-Krunch and his sons were men of peace.

At Gualverjaby there lived a man named Einar Thorlaksson. His father Thorlak had been the son of Thorfinn the White, son of Osmund, son of Einar, son of Thorfinn the Grey, son of Thrasi, son of Thord No-Nose, son of Thorfinn the Sky-Blue, son of Throdd, son of Einar, son of Thrasi Fat-Cheeks, son of Thorfinn the Plain Thorfinn. Einar had three strong sons: Einar, junior; Thorfinn and Thorolf. All four of them had sworn on the split face of their uncle Thorgeir to avenge his murder. His murderer had been that Thor-Krunch the Face-Splitter.

Hearing news of Thor-Krunch's departure for the Althing, Einar and his sons plotted to ambush him on his way and avenge the death. So they rode very quickly to the Varma River so that they would get there before Thor-Krunch. When Thor-Krunch arrived there he saw the sun glinting off the others' helmets and swords and he said to his sons:

"Kinsmen of one your father has slain. Will you face them?"

"We will face them, father," Geir said. Geir agreed.

Einar and his sons rode down upon them with great force, Thorfinn Einarsson's sword splitting Geir's shield from top to bottom, slicing his hand off in the process. Geir the Second then ran his sharpest spear straight through both Thorfinn and his brother Einar, pitching them from their horses, hurtling them a short distance through the air and planting them in the earth, the spear quaking.

These two men are now out of the saga.

Thorolf, infuriated, hurled himself upon the bleeding Geir and struck him in the neck with his sword. Geir fell back into the river and drifted away quite peacefully for someone who had just been treated so shabbily. He is now out of this saga.

As Thorolf stood gloating Geir the Second lopped his head off from behind. That day the fish feasted. Thorolf is now out of this saga.

From the first of the attack Thor-Krunch had been locked in combat with Einar Thorlaksson. First Einar had forced Thor-Krunch almost onto the slippery rocks of the river then had fallen back as Thor-Krunch lashed out in a fresh fury. Einar was one of those men who use weapons in either the left or the right hand equally as well and when he saw the killing of his last son by Geir the Second he would not stand for it. While he kept Thor-Krunch at bay

with his sword in his right hand he threw his spear with his left at Geir. The spear pierced Geir's spine and liver, affixing him upright to a tree. This tree has been called Geir's Oak ever since and he is now out of this saga.

Thor-Krunch was duly enraged by the death of his son and his heart was full of anger. He leapt at Einar.

"Die, Einar Thorlaksson!" shouted Thor-Krunch Thorgeirsson the Face-Splitter like a brazen bell.

"Die, Thor-Krunch Thorgeirsson!" shouted Einar Thorlaksson like an iron gong.

Together the foes raised their swords high above their heads and the sound of the metal through the air was like a swooping sparrow. Both blows struck home, splitting each other's helmet in two, sending orbs of brain rolling on the grass. And so both at once with one tremendous blow died Thor-Krunch the Face-Splitter and Einar Thorlaksson. They stood for a little while then both fell with a terrific crash to the ground.

And so this river bank is called the Field of Joy.

Everyone is now out of this saga.

So ends the saga of Thor-Krunch the Face-Splitter.

Thomas Quale

#441B

This is my 'note to the world'
that never wrote to me,
Perhaps it has been writing me,
and I just didn't see.
I overlooked the burning red
ignited on the snow,
A robin that was waiting still
for fatal cold to go.
The trees sang out this morning
as I ran along the walk,
But I ignored their splendid songs,
just hearing human talk.
A furry tail climbed past my pain
and shinnied up a limb.
I saw no squirrel in the tree,
my vision was so dim.
A child moaned in his hungry hurt,
but I just didn't hear.
Did someone else, besides myself,
exist upon this sphere?
We wrote our letters to the world,
but we just didn't see:
The world's been writing all along,
my dearest Emily.

Lawrence R. Lazzaro

Morpheus Is A Tyrant

- I. I've been sleeping for years,
Afraid to wake up,
Afraid of the dark—
Yet in fear of my dreams
- II. The sharpened sparkle beckons—
The slide through space
Past visionary blinding white,
Over roads untravelled
Since the start of time
- III. I dreamt I was being chased
by snow
It came after me
in angry howling packs
- IV. unknown and dark, whispers of hope
swaying truths, nagging fears
become Nightmare's feast
in the shadows of Sleep
- V. Starve your cold
Feed your fever
Feed your Fever
It's hungry
It's snarling outside
Don't go out
Or you'll never be seen again
- VI. Mist is in the streets,
Crawling, rolling,
Embracing each footstep—
Dogs in the distance
Howl in ancient agony at their tormentor,
The Full Moon
(presider over madness)
The dogs know the night—
They run with it,
Lust with it,
Kill with it
- VII. I'm on a journey,
But I don't know where I'm going—
Travelling through the dark
While awful flames lick my skin,
Speed my heart,
Hasten my descent
Into the pit
- VIII. At the back of my mouth I taste blood,
Copper and acrid with fear—
It is the blood of one
Running from judgement—
Once again I wake to the sound of screaming
Full and dry in the night—
The screams die only slowly
As my throat becomes raw— — — —

Scott Carrier

Me Me and my Clone Clone

Me Me
and my and my
clone clone clone clone
went out went out
for separate for separate
walks walks
and cast the same shadow.

Thomas Quale

A BIRTH NOT PROPHESED

I do not study music.
Quarter notes and half rests
decorate the coarse parchment.
The foreign calligraphy fascinates me
but I do not study music.

I do not practice vocal aerobics.
Scales and runs permeate the air
with the heavy aura of concentration.
The shining polish of rehearsal-worn recitals
sparkles in my eyes
but I do not practice voice.

I do not play the drums, trombone, or piccolo.
The woodwinds dance to the pulse of percussion
and the brass blurts its stark commands.
The orchestra envelops me
in overwhelming complexity
but I do not play the drums.

Measures of Music
form in my mind and bounce against my brain
until music escapes through my fingers,
beating soundlessly against soft thighs,
offering the easy harmony of backup vocalists.
Music runs to my feet,
beckoning response from willing hips and shoulders,
and setting the entire composition into motion.
Music explodes from my mouth,
the unforetold birth of life-sustaining sound.

I do not study music.
I live it.

Karen Kreutzian

Questions for Morgan Marie

I, the dried autumn milkpod,
Left in the void that she, my Morgan made,
Sat further chilling in the summer's
Dying promise, fading faster than
October fades into All Soul's Day.
That was the day she returned,
Unwilling to yield, passive in nothing.
I, the first witness,
Witnessed with a frozen tongue,
Thawed only by drinking from the Lourdes.
That last sip, that bitter swallow
Tasted of seven years, the seven long years
My Morgan Marie was gone.
Could she be asked, this woman
With the red hair, the fine red hair
Falling about her ivory shoulders,
If she remembered the times
Behind old Geringer's barn,
The gum cards, the secrets, the games of
War and the games of love?
We were children, just old enough to
Know the weight of a promise:
And even though my Morgan left—
Time, knowing we were old enough to plant,
Nursed the seed of passion until its last
Flowers had fallen into the black soil,
Seedless, leaving me to tend a barren garden.

Joseph Price

Shadows

Solitary shadow upon the wall
Doesn't speak, or sing, or move at all
Standing so still, so motionless
Reflecting its caster's loneliness

Dancing shadow upon the wall
Flowing, fluid, short, yet tall
Even when still, it moves no less
Reflecting its castor's happiness

Moving shadow upon the wall
Slow, sluggish, big, yet small
Its motion betrays its lifelessness
Reflecting its castor's loneliness

Paul Snow

Hot, Cross Buns

I like cruel twists.
I eat 'em for breakfast.
They're good for snacks, too.
Cruel twists of fate are the best.
They have a light taste on the mind's tongue,
Almost like cinnamon rolls—
Huge gooey sweet pastries.
I keep my eyes peeled for the ones with frosting.
When you ingest one of those,
You have to say,
"That takes the cake."

What else have we?
Ah! Cruel twists of love—
These have an exotic spice in them—
Almost like salt, or bitter herbs.
They're much more palatable if you smother them in honey.
Sometimes they're hard to digest,
And once you've swallowed them,
They wrench around in your stomach,
Radiating heat in scorching degrees.
The more honey you take with them,
The less trouble they give you later on.

I think cruel twists are difficult to make.
I used to pity the poor baker,
Believing that cruel twists were mistakes,
Experiments that went awry.
Now I realize that he makes them
Simply for the satisfaction it brings him.
I guess if they're good enough for him,
They're good enough for me.

Besides,
I like cruel twists.

Scott Carrier

DUET IN GREEK

Hubris

I pretend to be too much.
I am ohsogood.
even inside.
I can smile and put on the mask.
I can smile and show white teeth,
underneath gritting and baring.
I can tsksk at the injustice of it all
and turn around.
backstabbing.
I know where my forte lies,
and instead of burying it under piles of thankfulness
for a gift well-given
 well-received

I flaunt it.

Hamartia

yet
what should be my instrument to use?
I need to blow my own horn.
silently.
in awe. in silent awe at the vastness of my own capabilities.
Which to choose for now?
I have a soul from many souls,
a distinct soul.
an inherited soul.
But when it bleeds.
no one else feels the burning.
no one else minds that much.
If at all.
I have a balloon-potential that lies there,
needing to be filled to capacity
then stretched to firmness
 tautness
 straining
But when I limp along, breathless.
no one else feels the burn of the sludge inside.
no one else minds very much.
I'm wasting time.
content to be too little.

Suzanne Lazzaro

Raving and Drooling

The night gets just right . . .
the feral beast climbs up inside my throat
and tears at my voice
and eyes with his claws
and tells me
"I am in control.
I have you now."
I laugh more like a hungry snarl
and wolfsfur sprouts between my fingers,
crawls up my hands,
up my arms to my body.
I claw the air
in my own frustration,
howl
and am submerged in the wolf heart.
Bestial things slaver like me
and crouch down to be hidden,
hunting out the moving meat,
eyeing what can be caught,
ignoring that which won't.
The muscles tense up all along my back
in a long, knotting arch,
ready.
The movement is only human—
to smile with the canines,
shake his hand with your paw
and rip out his throat with your teeth.
The red bath spills on my eyes
and I can see all of them
in their hiding places deep inside,
all trapped and ready to be eaten.
But knowledge is pain and exacts its cost—
the wolf chest heaves,
forepaws shudder in the air.
I collapse, the wolf cub quivering,
falling back down into the empty depths
with a last howl
at what it knows.

Thomas Quale

Strained Interludes

Graceless facades—
The tiring age old game
Of mindless testing
Grows heavy behind the brow.
The charade is hard to sustain—
Sometimes impossible—
Yet it must be borne
Time after time after endless time.
The cold fire keeps rolling,
Pushing, testing the old confines
Beneath the placid surface of the eyes.
How much longer?
How much longer

Scott Carrier

step-son

My genes aren't your genes,
(not the jeans in my closet,
the ones in my body.)
They're some other man's.
My blood is his too, but
you stopped it when I bled.
My eyes aren't the same color as yours,
but they love the same colors,
and mountains.
They've seen the same sights
even though they're his.
But, my laugh is yours
and I think like you,
and I smile at the same things
you smile at,
we smile alike.
And you bought me the jeans in my closet.
My height isn't yours,
that's his too,
just like my name . . .
but I'm not his son,
(not the sun in the sky,
but the kind **you** love.)
I'm yours.

Lawrence R. Lazzaro

SUMMERDREAMS

I sing of peanuts I ate from Paydays,
I'd eat the Pay—,
My sister'd the —day,
All the day;
Of lemons from Klonz Corner Market,
Sliced and salted,
Sour-puss distorting,
Enjoying the salt,
Enjoying the salt.
I sing of potato chips and Pepsi,
Of Bazooka Bubble Gum,
Push-ups and Snickers,
And orange flavored Popsicles;
Of getting minute steaks for Mom,
And Kool Filter Longs,
Fat garlic dill pickles,
And two-for-a-penny candy,
And two-for-a-penny candy.
I sing of the sounds that vibrate my summerdreams,
And playing hopscotch on the drive,
Softball in the vacant lot,
And wanting to be a vet;
School's just over the hill,
I'm still too young to go.
I wish I had a swingset,
Or a big Saint Bernard,
Or a big Saint Bernard.

Lawrence R. Lazzaro

The Snakes of Mercury

I kissed her softly,
our gently caduceid forms
reclining to the bed,
our inhibitions crystallizing,
then splintering,
falling in shatters to the floor.
We kissed, entwined,
shedding the skin,
revealing the bone and muscle.

Thomas Quale

BLUES

If I were black,
I'd sing the blues,
"Them that's got shall have,
Them that's not shall lose . . ."

I'd moan low to
the blues in the night
and maybe even a lil'
St. Louis Woman.

I'd sing in the shower
and in the alley,
in a bar at an
out-of-tune upright.

But, I'm white and I'm stuck with **Handel**,
and maybe a little Gershwin . . .

Lawrence R. Lazzaro

THE POET'S DILEMMA

I tried to write a poem
but my Muse was dead
or comatose

and no amount
of pushing and prodding,
cursing, screaming,
pleasing
would waken her.

But walking far away
from paper and pen
my Muse mysteriously awoke
and left a poem
on the back porch of my mind
where it ran in the rain
until I found paper and pen.

Thomas Quale

Tears

I want to
scream
yell
throw things
kick someone

I want to
cry
Please hold me
close to your heart
so I can hear
your life pulse
as my sobs
sing my life's song.

Tera T. Nohrenberg

Sailing Calmly

He greets me every morning
Just like a sunrise welcomes a
new day.

His presence is with me all
through the day.

Together we sail calmly over
troubled seas, while other ships
are blown and beaten to a
sore distress. The winds that
drive these ships and mine are
one in the same, the only difference
is that my ship is guided by a
special touch.

To achieve this special touch
and sail calmly, is to
seek God's love.

Sally Schwenker

LAKE SHAWNO SUMMER

i

fish-scented,
the cool air
surrounds the telephone-poleless
serenity.

golden cottage lights
from the far side of the lake
parody poorly the setting sun
with their jaundiced bleeding
all across the blackness.

ii

Extinguishing their evidence-lanterns,
late night fishermen
stealthily creep towards shore,
onto the pier,
betrayed by the slap, slap of strung fish.

iii

corrupt waterbugs
impersonate fishing lines
in the murkiness

iv

Ivored silhouetted figures
posed in the darkness,
nearly as straight-still as the pier posts,
wait for a nibble, a bite
from some unsuspecting, near-to-shore perch
out to grab a midnight snack.

v

Waves of water visiting from the other side
lick hungrily at the piers
that give in to the whims of the tiny sea.

vi

Screendoors slam in time
to the Chubby Checker and Harmonicats
music melding with laughter from the lodge
while grandparents polka to the beat.

Suzanne Lazzaro

Go Fish

I sat dangling my line into the water. The bobber hadn't moved for what seemed like hours. The sun pulsed down on my covered head. I reached for my nth beer and readjusted my straw hat in the stilted silence. My eyes began to be drawn shut. I began to wander off on a tangent: what if extra-terrestrial beings began fishing for us — human beings? Do you find this far-fetched to envision?

Picture, if you will, a group of friends walking down a crowded street. Suddenly, bait is being dangled provocatively before your face. What would you do? I'd bite, if I really wanted it! And, picture, if you will, the reactions of the greedy victim's friends as he or she disappears after taking the bait.

The situation could be made more intimate, too. It's a Saturday afternoon. We are drinking beer and watching T.V. when Dave disappears. After several minutes, the question comes up, "Where did Dave go?" "Oh, he's in the kitchen getting a beer," is the obvious response. A half an hour passes and Dave doesn't return. Where is he? He's lying in the front yard with his guts pulled out. He'd taken the bait hook, line, and sinker, so to speak, and when it was time to remove the hook which he'd ingested, his insides came out. So, those extra-terrestrial fisher creatures threw him back. He was too small anyway. Thus, the secret would seem to lie in not taking the bait too deeply. Nibble gingerly on that bait. Savour it. And master the art of disentangling it from the hook without getting caught in the cheek.

Getting caught in the cheek, itself, would be relatively painless. I suppose it would feel somewhat like piercing your ear with a barbed earring. But wouldn't you rather frustrate your predator by confiscating the bait? This leads to another problem: what would be used as bait? This would seem to be a matter of cultural interpretation. For some people, a twelve ounce steak would be effective. Other possibilities range from a one hundred dollar bill, a martini, a candy bar, a bowl of rice, etc., to a jar of peanut butter, a new pair of shoes, the keys to a new car, etc. Yet, I believe that a quarter pound bag would loom superior above all of these. For, few things are more tantalizing, and few things are more in constant demand. I would not pass up the opportunity to grab at one hanging teasingly in front of my face under any circumstances! But this, of course, is subject to personal preference.

Another thought: how would they go about cleaning a human? There are no scales. Singeing off our body hair would be logical, if they could stand the stench! I suppose it would all depend on how they were planning on eating us. Caviar's out, for obvious reasons. We could be filleted, and served with tartar sauce and a lemon wedge. Or, we could be baked in a savoury sauce and served on a bed of rice — eyeballs intact — with sliced apple garnishes. Or maybe they'd prefer us steamed, accompanied by a baked potato smothered in butter and sour cream. Or, there could be the dreaded chef salad topped with chunk light human, water-packed, a hard-boiled egg, and lo-cal dressing for the diet-conscious. Pickled on pizza with mounds of melted, shredded cheese could be another possibility for the not-so-diet-conscious.

Absurd, you say? It could be. If so, the most probable reason is boredom with the sport of fishing — even on that level! Yet, my stomach has been effectively and sufficiently turned by the thought. And, I put aside my pole and give up fishing for the afternoon. I'd rather just drink beer anyway. But,

as I reach for another one, you can be sure I look to make sure there are no strings attached!

Celeste Hutton

Follow, gently follow

Misty moonshine echoes
words I need to hear.
Follow, gently follow.
Come closer, come be near.

Struggle onward,
onward
facing each tomorrow.
Dreams come true are yet
unknown
to you and I.

To you and I
facing each tomorrow
is like the lonely raindrop
amongst so many others.

Destiny unknown
until it is reached.
Only to find it was always there.

Enter in oh friend of mine.
Enter in and be content.
My mind

my house
my soul
are yours.

This day I promise myself
to you.
Only today I have to give,
but come share it with me.
Stop the mind of worries.
Today is meant for us.

Misty moonshine echoes
words I need to hear.
Follow, gently follow.
Come closer, come be near.

Struggle onward,
onward . . .

Peggy Sorensen

Today, Tomorrow, and Yesterday

Wondering what will happen tomorrow
Worrying about yesterday
Too busy to even think
What is happening today.

Blinded by our search for knowledge
We cannot see the things we should know
Hindered by our search for love
We cannot find the love we need to grow.

Imprisoned by our quest for wealth
So important to us, yet so worthless
Swallowed up in its own insignificance
Giving us pleasure, but not happiness.

Looking for the future
In the realm of tomorrow
But the future is not tomorrow
The future is here today.

Paul Snow

once a long time ago i made friends with a unicorn
his coat was white with goodness
he had a magical horn
we met in a forest of tall green trees
with flowers dancing at its feet
there we stood transfixed on each other
i was lost in his deep staring eyes
we walked along and all was silent
we talked without saying a single word
winding our way through the endless woods
we reached the end of the path
i turned and touched his forehead
a tear came to my eye
as i watched him walk away into the green
a sigh left me as i walked away
taking with me

THE PEACE OF THE UNICORN

Christina Marie Chesher

For You My Love

I went to the bird market
and I bought birds
for you
my love.

I went to the flower market
and I bought flowers
for you
my love.

I went to the scrap-metal market
and I bought chains,
heavy chains,
for you
my love.

And then I went to the slave market
and I looked for you
but I didn't find you
my love.

translated from the French of
Jacques Prevert by Thomas Quale.

Liquorice

Talk
and smile
and change the subject,
smile,
drink the glasses empty,
all,
smile,
talk politely,
deflect the advances,
parry the thrusts,
deny
and smile
and change the subject,
smile
and drink
and put one more coin
in the jukebox.

Thomas Quale

Teddy Bear

What is a teddy bear
Alone, by himself
With so much to give—
His love, his caring,
His understanding,
Yet with no one to give to
Alone, by himself
He is nothing

What is a teddy bear
Alone, by himself
How does he survive?
He dies every day inside
Each hour of each day
That no one cares
For alone, by himself
He is nothing

What is a teddy bear
Alone, by himself
Full of power
And ready to explode
To shower all his love
Onto anyone who asks for it
Yet alone, by himself
He is nothing

Paul Snow

PROLIFE

Apothecary's potion makes
safe from unwanted aliens.
Pray to the low-estrogen god!
(no longer legal)

Hangers return to Harlem-vogue,
on-the-sly doctors for the rich.
Money's constitutional for
breaking moral laws.

"Unjust murder!" they sermonize
for wealthy, ego-centric votes.
Pray to the Moral-Falwell god!
(soon to be called Christ)

Lawrence R. Lazzaro

TROIS ANS APRES

It is time that I rest:
I was overwhelmed by destiny.
Talk to me of nothing else
But the obscurity in which men lie!

How shall I begin anew?
From now on I will not ask
Of the vast creation
A little silence or peace!

Why do you call me again?
I have done my task and my duty.
He who labors before the dawn
May die before the evening.

—from the French of Victor Hugo
translated by Suzanne Lazzaro

ODE TO FRIVOLITY

Here's to frivolity!
I'll drink to that!
To studying music,
and humanities.
To love and seduction,
and walking in the rain.
To drinking coffee,
To getting drunk and sleeping in.
To falling in love and running away.
To writing poetry in a little brown book,
and contemplating existence . . .

Lawrence R. Lazzaro

Monazein

Once again I enter my room—
My silent domain,
My quiet nothingland
Where I am I
And the world outside can be kept at bay
Until I must join it once more.
It would be pleasant to stay here forever,
Erased from the passing bulk of man.
Solitude suits my moods,
Or at least the ones shaded in grey and black.
There are few others,
And I can ignore them if need be.

Scott Carrier

Becoming Myself

Let me be
who I am
Let me become
Who I am to be
I know that I may
make some mistakes
along the way
But let me make them
By myself

I want my mistakes
to be my mistakes
Not yours

I need the room
to develop, to grow
To find out
who I am to be
What I am to do
With my life

Give me the room
I need for now
Do not force me
To take it for myself

Paul Snow

Outflow

Time to face the music—
Turn and breathe the awful chords—
Absorb the nightmare
And reeling in the pain-drunk haze
Wish for death . . .

Grieved asthmatic mourning
And Sawtooth ragged weeping
Slide the mind but not the heart—
Salvation is a word and nothing more—

Scott Carrier

AND HER FACE SHONE WITH BEAUTY UNSURPASSED

"Bitch," she thought to herself as she casually unwrapped the scarf in which she was mummified. Damn it, she was sick of winter! In winter, it was impossible to get away from people like Julie by seeking refuge in the out of doors. And now, in the middle of March, it was getting especially bad.

"It's pretty fucking cold out!" With that opener, she reached into the popcorn bowl. "How come I can never remember that I don't like that stuff?" She headed for the fridge, lit a cigarette, and gulped chocolate milk straight from the bottle between gulps of smoke. Julie was painting her nails. She never talked much when she was doing that, or curling her hair, or putting on make-up. In fact, it seemed like she only talked when she knew it would bother Rhonda — in public for the most part. Rhonda was vivacious — a down-to-earth-type-person. She didn't need meek and mimsey Julie around murmuring cute quips at the appropriate times.

"How was work?" The question was asked with laborious concentration between brush strokes of the third coat.

"I was hung over 'til this afternoon. I wish I wouldn't do that. I don't think it's worth it to feel miserable when there's no one to blame but myself."

"All things in moderation — mustn't overdo. That's what my Grandpa always says."

"Hey, Jul, I'm not your Grandpa." This set Julie off on a tangent of titillation. Why were blonds so silly and insistent upon laughing at nothing? The popcorn smelled stale; the nail polish emitted its dizzying odor. The room reeled a little. Rhonda held her hand to her face and felt that she was flush. Julie continued to titter and prattle of her Grandfather's maxims — all very good in theory, but impossible to follow, and therefore not worth the air or effort expended.

"I guess I'm not over my headache yet." Julie hadn't even listened. She seldom listened. Oh, why couldn't people see through her? She wasn't cute and coy, just dull and selfish and conceited.

"Rhonda, can you just sit down and relax for a while? You're acting so nervous."

"I'm not nervous; I'm just incredibly aware." She was, however, much more than incredibly aware. She was electrified on a two-twenty current, intensified to a simulated high. She reached animatedly for another cigarette.

Julie had been studying her carefully. "Shit, Rhonda, that chocolate milk must've given you a calcium overload."

Rhonda crushed out the cigarette and began to wrap herself in her habitual winter cocoon. She needed to get away. If only it wasn't so cold outside, she would go think and walk. It'd been five and a half months since she'd been able to do that, and it now seemed to be the sole solution.

"See ya," Julie cheerfully threw in.

Rhonda headed for her '64 Chevy and then rejected the idea of a drive. She, instead, walked the six blocks to the nearest bar, keeping up a brisk pace to the repetition of, "She bugs the shit out of me. I can't stand it anymore." She picked up momentum to a near run. She was still muttering as she pushed on the heavy door and entered Jonathan's Pub. She ordered a whiskey sour, then another. Her nerves were calmed, and she began to think.

How can she exist? She can't be seen with a hair or eyelash less than perfectly placed, with a crease less than evenly pressed, without painted lips, eyes, nails. Shit, her whole outlook on life was painted — prim and proper. Not only was she looking at the world through rose-colored glasses, she saw it through rose-colored eyelids as well — also painted. How could she function, exist in that artificial environment? She was truly sweet, sincere, well-meaning, caring, and, of course, beautiful, but was it all a facade — a sickly-sweet type of artificial sentimentality? No, Rhonda didn't think so. Julie just expected to spend time on herself. After all, didn't she get up at 5:45 every morning to be ready to leave by 8:30 (breakfast not included)? Simply stupid was Rhonda's appraisal of this.

"Anything else, ma'am?"

"Well, maybe a couple more — it's cold out there, and I've got to get the anti-freeze into my system."

Refreshed, relaxed, renewed, and only slightly intoxicated, Rhonda began her return journey home. She stiffened against the cold, thinking that fortunately it was only six blocks.

As she opened the door to their apartment, she heard Fresh Aire playing. Typical of Julie, she thought.

"Julie, Julie," she called. No response. She headed for the bathroom. The door was ajar. Julie was no doubt primping again. Collapsed on the floor in front of the mirror lay Julie with a camouflage green face.

The obituary read as follows:

Dead is Julie Morgan, age 20, of 621 North Merrimont in Albina. Surviving her are parents James and Virginia Morgan of Nemaha, Nebraska. Julie was their only daughter. Cause of death has been determined to be suffocation due to prolonged use of a beauty mask.

Celeste Hutton



Photography by Mark Rosenthal