Angel Dances

It's not like you think.

They wear cracked brogans
and throw down plyboard

so that the clogging raises hell.

They slip out to the car
for the pint in the glove box
and make water under the stars,

curlicues smoking in the frost.

They favor bluegrass
for the pungent fiddle tunes:

Lard in the Skillet
Slapping the Mud
Break Me Off a Switch
The Girl from Janktown
Cuttin the Young Hog

Michael Chitwood

Skateboarding in Sarajevo
or, a prelude to an ordinary evening in Atlanta

We seek
Nothing beyond reality.
—Wallace Stevens, "An Ordinary Evening in New Haven"

Wer, wenn ich schriee, hörte mich denn aus der Engel Ordnungen?
—R. M. Rilke, Duineser Elegien

Who, if I cried out, would hear me then
among the angelic orders? Rilke's old question
at Duino, just a little ways up the Adriatic
from the current south Slavic unpleasantness.
Bombs over Dubrovnik, the prolonged siege
of Sarajevo, and the more or less complete obliteration
of a great deal of lately existing medieval architecture.

The things I do. . . squeezed into black tie at six p.m.,
already late for a midtown "reception to meet the artist,"
and waiting for a MARTA train. . . *Please be patient.*
We are experiencing, as they always say,
no more than *a momentary interruption.*

We ought to be more sympathetic, here in Atlanta,
to the imminent demise of a recent Olympic host,
even if a century and a quarter of later nastiness
has long since shifted our regional obsessions
away from the doings of William Tecumseh Sherman.

It is, in Sarajevo, as if rednecks from a five hundred mile radius
had gathered to obliterate the Balkans' most singularly successful
multicultural experiment.

Through months on months of the siege, a solo cellist
would play for fifteen minutes daily on the street
where women and children died from shellfire.
Standing on the eastbound platform in the Inman Park MARTA station,
I could, if I turned, survey the town houses built atop the central sites

of the Battle of Atlanta. July twenty-second eighteen sixty-four
really was a whole other time and universe,
and my great-grandfather was, presumably,
somewhere over there behind my present office,
rescuing the wounded under shellfire
from the Federal batteries on Battery Place.
I'll never know, of course, but it somehow pleases me
to think that family history comes around again,
the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce. . .
Karl Marx's Eighteenth Brumaire comes in handy so often.

Tired witticisms of a tired art critic. I hear that skateboarding
is popular these days in Sarajevo,
Snipers' Alley being a favorite spot for death-defying
feats of acrobatics. When Susan Sontag
came to direct *Godot*, her first symbolic act
was to decline the wearing of a flak jacket.

De Gress's guns were right up there. Under those historical circumstances
would not have recommended standing
n this particular railroad cut.
Hood's men advanced over there by the jogging trail.

Who, if I cried out, would hear me then
mong the non-angelic orders? Skateboarding in Sarajevo,
ike playing the cello where a shell struck, is an obvious last affirmation
f the survival of a cultured, ironic city.

ately the citizens have grown tired of irony
nd begun making babies as a form of resistance.
his does not change, in any case, the skateboarders
r the cellist. In these corners of skeptical Europe
ymbols still count for more than population data.

ullets fly here too, actually, too many nights
hundred feet or at most three or four
om most of the east-west MARTA stations.
n, say, any ordinary evening in Atlanta,
oes anyone play cello or a sweet jazz trumpet
here local children fell in a crossfire?

Civilization, or some pathetic facsimile of it,
depends on such stuff that (and I quote) *makes nothing happen:*
a long poem at Duino; skateboarding past snipers;
producing Beckett in a besieged city; or any
act that interferes with our daily distraction.

No wonder our own polite, historically appropriate response
to the drawn-out destruction of some of eastern Europe's
most significant centers of art and intellect
is "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn."

Well, Hell. The MARTA train is finally coming.
Another opening, another show. Another six newspaper column inches.
No high explosives will fall tonight on the High Museum.
Murders and rapes occur at the Arts Center station
no more than once or twice a year. And, in any case, everyone knows
nobody but an art critic would come by public transport.

Who, if I cried out, would hear me then
in any public orders whatsoever? Skateboarding in Sarajevo,
the cello player rescuing the souls of the dead,
pools of blood at certain street corners, and a damned cold wind
hustling me onto MARTA, where *your next station is King Memorial;*
exit here for the Martin Luther King Historic District
and Oakland Cemetery. Leaves whirl by outside,
and I write a stupid opening sentence I will never use:
"It's hard, at most receptions for the artist, to see what's really happening."
For beauty's the beginning of terror we can barely endure,
and these days even the animals know it, that we aren't securely at home
in our media-mediated universe. *Who, if I cried. . . .*

Five Points station. Transfer point for the north-south line. . . .
Who, if I. . . . Skateboarding, the cellist of Sarajevo, and Susan Sontag
were all most elegantly documented by Annie Leibovitz
in an autumn issue of *Vanity Fair*, whose cover story was
"Julia Roberts: Happy At Last."

And who, if I cried out in the Arts Center station. . . .
For beauty's *(yes, I'm late)* the beginning. . .
Frankly, my dear, I don't give. . . . *Hi, Ned. Hi, Max.*
Hello, Marianne. Hello, Mary Lu,
goodbye heart. . . Who, if I
cried out now, would hear. . . *O, Hell.*

28-29 december 1993, being the western church feasts of the slaughter of the holy innocents & martyrdom of thomas à becket

Jerry Cullum

Blubber Love

Rita Ciresi

Lorenz told me to quit moping around. "You're like an old dog, drooling and farting over a lost bone," he said. "Forget her. One good grind is all it'll take."

My brother has never taken much stock in romance. He told me to get out of my dark apartment and rejoin the world. Take the next train down. He would set my head straight.

So I went down to Ho-Ho-Kus—to have Lorenz pester me, Bets feed me, and the girls ignore me, as if I were some boring object that kept tripping them up, like a footstool or doorstop. I had lost my charm for them when I had lost Rosalie. Gone was the glamour of our visits—the red lipstick kisses that clung to their cheeks, the sophisticated whiff of Rosalie's perfume, the prissy little gifts that made them so happy. "Uncle Karl, you bring us *boy* toys," Dina told me last time I visited. For that reason, I spent an inordinate amount of time in the five-and-dime outside Grand Central, examining each cheap plastic doll and brightly colored jumprope, trying to pick out the perfect thing.

It was a hot July day. Huge fans roared in the corner of the store. The heat made me indecisive, and I wandered up and down the aisles. Dina and Donna were too young for yo-yos and too old for rubber ducks. Some inflatable animals sat on the top shelf—a fire-breathing dragon, a shark baring his fangs, and a walrus with ivory-colored tusks. I took down the walrus, tucked it under my arm, and hustled it up to the counter, glancing at my watch. As usual, I was running late.

The woman behind the cash register had a blond beehive and turquoise catglasses that sparkled under the fluorescent lights. She pointed to the walrus with one of her long orange fingernails. "Ya gotta getta flat one," she said. "Undaneath the shelf in plastic bags. The ones fulla air are for display."

I looked over my shoulder. Behind me in line was a teenager holding a bag of pink curlers and a jar of goopy green hairstyling gel. Behind her was an old man with a yellow complexion clutching a bottle of Maalox. I set the walrus down on the counter and got out my wallet. "I'll pay you a quarter more for this one."

"Ya gotta getta flat one."

"You want a flat one?" I asked her. I turned the walrus over, found its plug, and pulled it. "Here's a flat one for you." I plunked two dollars on the counter and ran down 42nd toward the station, dodging people to get to the ticket counter, the walrus hissing all the way. By the time I had dashed for the train and flopped down in one of the aisle seats, the walrus was completely deflated and I was out of breath.

We rode together in silence, the flattened walrus slung over one of my knees. Something in my unconscious had led me to buy this hideous thing.

Earlier that week I had returned home to the empty apartment, made my usual dinner—a hasty tuna fish sandwich and a bowl of noodles—and plopped down on the couch to watch a nature program that ran at 7:00. That night the program focused on the Northern Seas—frigid cliffs, gusty winds, and slippery marine mammals dog-paddling in choppy waters. The announcer had a calm, soothing voice. *Eskimo knives, darts, and harpoons sometimes are to no avail when it comes to the walrus. His tough, heavy hide can bear repeated attacks! Like other cheerful members of the pinniped family, the sea lion likes to indulge in high-spirited fun. But beware the wrath of the aroused male!*

I set my bowl of noodles on the couch (Rosalie had taken the coffee table). Two male sea lions were shown rearing up, bopping their bald heads upon one another, in a bitter fight to the death for a prized female in heat. It made my heart ache. I pitied the loser. But at least he was put out of his misery. I was sure mine would never end. If only I could go back in time, I too would confront Sandro. I would challenge him to a duel. Ah! I would run a sword straight through his naked back at the precise moment he mounted Rosalie, pinning them both to the bed!

I must have looked like a madman, sitting there on the train, trying to shake out all the evil thoughts pent up inside me by shaking my head. I felt crazy, chock full of wild urges that never could be expressed. But in the presence of others, I had to keep up appearances, reply *fine, and you?* to whoever inquired after my health. I had to take the subway without confiding my sorrows to the fellow holding the next strap, shop for groceries without bursting into invective at the stock boy over the lack of fresh hamburger buns, or weeping, incomprehensibly, over a bruised can of Jolly Green Giant peas. Tears, tantrums, and tussles? They were reserved for lower forms of life: animals, cavemen, children. Lucky three.

* * *

At the end of the line, Lorenz was waiting for me in his emerald green Lincoln, which obviously had just been washed and polished. Some of the yellow wax still clouded the silver door handle. I got in.

Lor looked at the sagging piece of plastic in my hand. "It's a walrus," I explained. "For the girls." I found the plug, put it in my mouth, puffed up my cheeks, and blew. More spit than air came out. I blew again.

"You smoke too much," Lorenz warned me.

I thought about that run down 42nd, how I had huffed and puffed even after I finally sat down, my heart thumping a deep, dark drumroll for my mortality.

"Nonsense," I said.

Lor took the walrus from me, leaned away from the steering wheel, and blew into the plug. In between short, powerful breaths, he kept on talking—idle, staccato statements about the new partner in his urology practice, the stuffed pork chops Bets had promised to make for dinner, and other tidbits calculated less to convey information than to demonstrate the superiority of his lungs. Lorenz liked to play colossus. No matter what the task, he performed it like a boy at summer camp, hoping to outstrip all the competition.

The walrus was whole again. Lor pushed in the plug and examined it.

"Ugly sucker," he said, tossing it into the back seat. "The girls will love it."

And—surprisingly—they did. They scrambled up from the floor when we came in. Both of them looked beyond me, and for a moment I imagined they were craning their necks, just as they used to do, to see if Rosalie might be coming behind me. But then I realized they were looking for their gift.

"Is that dog for me?" Dina asked.

I held the toy out. "It's a walrus. See, look at his tusks."

Dina's sole interest in the tusks lay in grabbing them like two handles to pull the walrus away.

"Share it," Lorenz said, as Donna toddled up to see.

Dina clung to the walrus with one hand and held her nose with the other. "Donna smells bad."

Lorenz gave me a feeble smile. "Oh Bets," he called out. "Front and center on the old poopdeck!"

Bets emerged from the kitchen, wiping her hands on a dishtowel. Flour clung to her chintz apron, and her light brown hair, frazzled at the ends, hung limp. *Quelle coiffe*, Rosalie used to remark. *It looks like she's been standing over the stove all day*. Even on the most special occasions, Bets could never match Rosalie's immaculate toilette. But what she lacked in glamour she more than made up for in kindness. She kissed and hugged me. She had a strong, solid back that Rosalie also had scorned. *Built like a mule*, she said.

Bets swooped Donna up and sniffed at her bottom. "I don't smell anything," she said. As Bets carried her off to check, Donna began to howl, holding out her hands towards the walrus. Dina smiled. She sat on the floor, clutching her prize. She was triumphant.

At four years old, Dina already was the sort of kid people described—with a mixture of admiration and disapproval—as *smart as a whip*. Rosalie and I were her godparents, and I was convinced that at her baptism a grievous error was made. Rosalie had worn a sleeveless dress to the church, taboo in those days. As Dina lay all dressed in white in Rosalie's luscious bare arms, I swear that Father Kopansky, aroused by the spectacle, accidentally anointed Dina with the spirit of her godmother rather than the spirit of the Almighty. She was a vixen.

* * *

It started off as a typical Saturday afternoon. Lorenz gave me a beer and fixed himself a drink. Bets got the girls into their bathing suits and sent us all outside, then went to the store to pick up some things for supper. I sat down on the new lawn furniture—two chaise longues padded with splashy orange and yellow cushions—while Lorenz filled up the wading pool with water. The girls jumped in. Within two minutes, they were fighting over the walrus. It wasn't much of a contest. Dina was bigger, smarter, and could yell the loudest. Lorenz finally strode over, grabbed the walrus by the scruff of the neck, and carried it back to where we were sitting. He dropped it down by the side of my chair, where it fell off its front flippers onto its face.

"Let me teach you a lesson about life, Karl," he said. "Never buy one toy for two kids."

I just wasn't thinking." I sipped my beer, watching Dina order her younger sister in and out of the pool to fetch her a ball, then a pail. "It would be all right if Dina didn't push Donna around."

"That's perfectly normal," Lorenz said. "I mean, look at us when we were kids."

"You were a rotten older brother," I said.

He toasted me with his gin. "You were the perfect younger one."

It was true. I was gullible, malleable, eager to please. I once overheard my mother describe me as *Born with his heart on his sleeve*. She said it in a sorrowful tone, as if she had brought forth into the world a child with a serious defect.

Lorenz had long been on a campaign to rid me of this handicap. He stretched out his legs, spread his flat toes wide apart, and cleared his throat. "So," he said casually, "how're things?"

This was just the kind of question I hated. "Fine," I said. "I have three new students. One of them plays very well."

"No, I mean, how are things?" He gave me a significant look. "You know, *things*. Are you seeing anybody?"

"You know I'm not."

"Why not?"

"It's too soon," I said.

"Six months is too soon?"

"Seven."

"Whatever. Most relationships don't even last that long."

"So why bother?" I asked.

"Have some fun ones at first."

"I don't want fun ones."

"You *need* fun ones," he said. "You don't need serious, believe me. What about that student you just mentioned?"

"He's eleven years old."

Lorenz coughed. "Forget him."

"He wasn't up for consideration," I said.

"So what about the girls?" Lorenz dogged on. "Got any girls? Who are we looking at? What are our choices?"

There were times when Lorenz reminded me of a bookie waving a racing form in front of my face, begging me to put a buck on one of the top fillies. I could have told him he was crass, and left it at that. But I had to admit that this was nothing I hadn't done before on my own—running down the list of possibilities and weighing them each in my head.

"There's—there's a girl called Catherine O'Donnell," I said.

"Aye, Cathy—that wild Irish rose, just waiting to be plucked!" he said. "Her round, innocent, lovely face—her long, graceful hands!"

"Her joints look arthritic."

"But she plays the scale like a dream."

"She's religious."

"So tell her you were an altar boy. Talk about Bach and God. Go for it."

I shook my head. "I can't."

"Why not?"

Once, when I was standing at the bottom of the elevator at Macy's, waiting for Rosalie to end her shift, I noticed Catherine at the cosmetics counter. "Rosalie sold her a tube of lipstick," I said.

"Lorenz threw up his hands. "Rosalie has sold lipstick to practically every woman in New York!"

"I know."

"At this rate, you'll have to go to the moon to get laid."

"I will not. I could go to Connecticut or New Jersey."

"So why don't you?"

"Because," I said. "Because I still—feel things for Rosalie. And because love isn't like a faucet."

"Who said it was?"

"You did. Acting like people can turn feelings on and off with a twist of a spigot. That's not the way it goes."

Lorenz looked surprised. He even looked a little contrite. I should have stopped there, but I didn't. "I mean, put yourself in my place," I said. "What if it were you and Bets?"

He didn't even think about it for a minute. "Bets would never," he flatly said.

It was an honest assessment. I couldn't be angry with him—only regretful that Rosalie had been my own bad choice and that I first had to live with her, and then live without her, for all the rest of my years. I drank down the last of my beer and stared at the suds that clung to the side of the glass. I must have had a morose look on my face, because Lorenz immediately offered me a refill.

"Just keep an eye on the heirs to my throne," he said, as he got up and took my glass. "Make sure they don't kill each other."

He padded across the lawn to the house. I looked over at the girls. Donna was squatting in the pool, methodically scooping up water in an orange pail and dumping it out again. Dina crouched on the ground. As Lorenz walked off, she sensed an opportunity and wandered over. She sat on the end of the chaise longue, primly pressing her knees together and making a conscious effort not to look at the coveted walrus.

"Guess what?" she said.

"What," I answered.

"I'm going to be five next month."

"Yes," I said. "I remember."

"I'm having a birthday party."

"I hope I'm invited."

"Yup. You're invited with Aunt Rosalie."

The way she stared at me disconcerted me. I leaned over to the table and took a sip of Lorenz's gin.

"I'm afraid Aunt Rosalie won't be coming," I said.

"Why not?"

I thought of all the pleasant little phrases etiquette books recommended for unwanted invitations: *other plans, previous commitments, pressing engagements*. I couldn't count the number of times over the past few months that I had ducked the issue with such silly excuses. It was time to 'fess up. "Dina," I said firmly, "Aunt Rosalie will never come back here again."

I hoped I hadn't shocked her. But she nodded, a little sadly, taking it so well I wondered why I hadn't been straightforward before.

"Daddy said so," she said.

That irked me. Although it was completely true, it was my shot to call, not Lorenz's. I took another, bigger sip of Lorenz's drink. The screen door opened and Lorenz stepped out onto the porch. Then, from inside the house, I heard the phone ring. He waved at me—little knowing how much I resented him at that moment—and went back in to answer it.

I turned back to Dina. "What else did your daddy have to say?"

"He said you were getting a horse."

"What?"

"So you wouldn't be married anymore."

"A di-*vorce*. Yes, that's right. We'll go to court and—and get unmarried." Put in a child's terms, it seemed simple and free of malice. "Then maybe someday we'll both marry someone else again."

Dina swung her legs. "I know who Aunt Rosalie is going to marry."

I felt as if someone had socked me in the gut. Was it possible? That even a four-year-old, on the few occasions she had seen them together, had noticed the sparks flying between Sandro and Rosalie? Or had she just overheard Bets and Lorenz discussing it, one evening while they thought the girls were engrossed in TV or fast asleep?

"Don't be silly," I said sharply. "Rosalie isn't going to marry anyone for a long time. And neither am I." That much at least, was certain. I bent down and grabbed hold of the walrus. My hand scraping against the plastic produced a flatulent noise that made Dina giggle. "Here," I said. "Go play with this. In the pool. And don't hog it, you little piglet."

Dina grabbed the walrus and ran back to the pool. Donna held out her hands to get the toy, but Dina plopped it in the water and mounted it like a horse, heigh-ho Silver, away.

"Share," I called out. But the command was half-hearted, and absolutely absurd coming from me, whose insides were twisted with possessiveness. So what, I thought. So what if I couldn't be blasé, couldn't be adult, couldn't be *European* about it. Rosalie had accused me of being *bourgeois* about her affair with Sandy, but wasn't I merely being human, wanting everything she had to give me? What was love, then, if you were willing to share your partner with someone—anyone—right off the street, giving her out as freely as you gave the time, handing her to whoever asked, the bum who begged others for a dime, the man in the phone booth who needed to borrow a pencil? I took the old-fashioned view of marriage. I believed that we should cleave together—fasten our grips and hang on for dear life, as protection from the outside world—or at least from such charming, good-looking men as Sandy.

Sandy seemed to have it all—a hint of the Old World, the breeziness of the New. Even when I cursed Rosalie for being seduced—or seducing—him, I couldn't forget how taken I was with him myself, that cold winter evening we arrived at Lorenz and Bets' house and he rose from the sofa, all five and a half feet of him, his hand outstretched, a warm smile crinkling up on his face. We were all intrigued by the details: the crisp white shirt beneath his rich maroon sweater, the tasselled loafers, the slight gap between his upper front teeth. And his accent—in such good taste, you hardly even remembered it was there, except when he fished for a word, couldn't find it, and turned to us for help, only to discover a more gracious synonym after we had offered up something feeble from our lame vocabularies.

At first he was Lorenz's catch—proof that not all doctors were brusque, crass characters interested only in blood, guts, and bones. *Wait 'til you meet this guy*, he said. *A general surgeon. He comes from Venice. He speaks a million languages. He reads. He's interested in music.* "You should hear him in the shower after surgery," Lorenz said, while Sandy shook his head, laughing. "Belting it out like Caruso!"

At Lorenz's insistence, Sandy sang for us that night—hokey songs like "Adeste Fideles" and "Ave Maria." I accompanied him on the piano. He did have a gorgeous, full-throated voice and a natural sense of when to swell up and die down in each song. Accompanying him was easy. Lorenz, Bets, and I all clapped wildly when he was done, as if we had never heard anyone sing so well before. But Sandro's slight, mocking bow seemed directed at Rosalie, whose applause for anything never went beyond polite.

He was the first to leave that night, and we did nothing but talk of him after he left. Lorenz, boisterous from the wine, loudly sang Sandy's praises, and Bets said that whoever married him would be lucky. She would have to be nothing less than perfect, I said. The more compliments we heaped on Sandy, the more Rosalie's lower lip curled back.

"Well, Madame?" Lorenz finally burst out. "*Que pensez-vous?*"

Rosalie smiled. "Too short," she said. "Too Italian."

Lorenz hooted. "He doesn't even have dark hair!"

"*Ca n'importe pas*. He has the beak."

"It's very aristocratic," I said. "He looks like nobility."

"Not when you make him stand up like a gondolier and sing for his supper," Rosalie said.

Lorenz continued to tease Rosalie about how demanding she was, how fussy. Rosalie refused to give in, finally tossing a cocktail napkin at Lor and calling an end to the soirée. Back at the apartment, she was surprisingly docile and dreamy, and uncharacteristically sweet to me. At that point, if I had been going to accuse Rosalie of being unfaithful, I would have charged her with having an affair with her hairbrush, which she lovingly cradled in her hands each night, pulling one hundred long, provocative strokes down her black hair. Usually she wouldn't let me touch her until she had gotten that ritual out of the way. But that night she let me undress her, smiling absent-mindedly as I nibbled her shoulders and breasts and dragged my tongue in a long, slow

swath down her belly. The more complacent she was, the more I wanted to please her. She felt alternately smooth and rough, and tasted salty, fishy, bitter. I went down on her, and her legs and trunk stiffened, as if she had been shot through with ice, when she came.

It was a memory I played over and over again in my head, like a slow, sad favorite song—probably because it was the last time I remember being with her without anger, without fear that she would leave me. After that evening it all became a game—turning the other cheek during the day, turning our backs at night in bed. It was all silence, abruptly punctured by wild volleys of nasty comments. *You look miserable. Well, you look happy. You might at least keep up appearances. Why bother? Working tonight? Going somewhere?*

Because it had to be someone's fault, I blamed it all, ultimately, on Lorenz. Oh why had he ever invited Sandy to the house that night? Why hadn't he left Sandy back at the hospital, where he would have remained a two-dimensional figure we heard about from time to time, another character in one of Lorenz's tales from the surgery, another horny doctor who had goosed a more-than-willing nurse? I could hardly abide being put to such shame by a colleague of my brother's, a man he came face-to-face with every day, albeit behind the shifty cover of a surgical mask. "I'm sorry," Lorenz finally said to me, when it somehow became apparent I resented his role in it all. "How could I have known? But if it hadn't been him—"

"There wouldn't have been anyone else," I said.

Lorenz shrugged, as if to let me know it wasn't for him to say. I would have to find out on my own that Rosalie and I had been ill-suited for one another. In the meantime, I could think of nothing but that pull between Sandy and Rosalie, as strong and as plain as the pull between two magnets I once had purchased for the girls in the very same five-and-dime I had bought the walrus. The magnets were glued onto the feet of two plastic dogs—one white and one black Scottish terrier. Dina and Donna had spent hours goading the dogs to join forces, testing over and over again how close the two could come before they hesitated, quivered, and then snapped together, locked in a determined embrace. Some higher force was behind it—physics, nature—and to fight against it was useless. Who had the strength to wrestle with fate?

I bit my lip, then let out a deep breath, as if I could release with it what little urge I had left to fight. It was done, everyone told me. Over. Out of my control. But I felt as if I would never be able to put it behind me. My heart still thumped when I grew close to Herald Square. I still saw her face appear in the crowds on Fifth Avenue, and at night, I had odd, truncated conversations with her, followed her down some street, reached out to touch her dress, and pressed my body against hers in my dreams.

I nursed Lorenz's gin like lemonade. *Dreams aren't real life, kiddo,* I heard Lorenz tell me in my head. *Real life is the present, the good old here and now.* But what did the here and now consist of?

This: one morose, soon-to-be divorced man draining his brother's gin and tonic to the ice cubes, passively observing two uncherubic little girls in a fight until the death for a lousy two-dollar toy. Dina and Donna crouched in the

pool, the walrus between them. Dina had the tusks in her hands and Donna, bless her heart, was hanging onto the tail for dear life. "It's mine!" Dina screamed, while Donna made odd grunting noises. She completely lacked a coherent vocabulary, but determination was evident in her clenched teeth and red, breathless face.

I knew I should break it up. But the fight, raw as a bloody steak, fascinated me. It was the same sort of fascination that glued me to the TV at 7:00 each night so I could travel to the wilds of the Kalahari Desert and the canopy of the tropical forests, the same need to participate, vicariously, in the chicker-chat-chat of monkeys mating and the hiss of cobras honing in on their prey. All those months I had lusted after the primitive—and to think that I could have found it right there in Ho-Ho-Kus, sitting in my brother's backyard! I watched that walrus being pulled from left and right, silently cheering on the underdog. "Go, Donna," I said beneath my breath. "Go, go, get it!"

Then Lorenz came dashing across the lawn, sloshing beer on the grass. "You were supposed to be watching them!" he called out.

"I am watching them."

"You're crazy!" he said, putting down the glass and the beer on the table. He strode over to the girls. "Dina," he said loudly. "Donna. Whoa. Yo. What do you say, kiddos? Time out. Cool it. Just cut it out, will you? Girls, there are other toys. Girls, are you listening? There are other fish in the sea!"

Lorenz, at his wits' end, sank his nails into the back of the walrus and grabbed it away from the girls. For the second time that day, the poor walrus had the plug pulled on him. With a whoosh, he zoomed out of Lorenz's hands and flew in a crazy, cockeyed arch before he fell, deflated, into the wading pool, soggy and pathetic as a man drowned at sea.

I closed my eyes and felt myself going down with him, falling far below the surface of the ocean. I descended through coral reefs, schools of fish, forests of seaweed. The water was murky. But finally, paddling among the rocks that looked as fragile as sandcastles, I thought I glimpsed my love glistening on the ocean floor, halfway submerged in sand, a heavy, sunken treasure never to be recovered. I had two choices: to embrace it and drown, or to swim away. I struggled. I floundered. My lungs felt as if they would burst before the instinct for survival finally won out and I shot back up to the surface, leaving it behind for only the lowest forms of life to see.

Triumph! I sat there, ready to take on the next fish in the sea. But my victory lasted only a moment. All my hopes were deflated as Lorenz—who truly, at heart, was as soft a touch as I was—gave in to the screams and cries of the girls for their beloved object, held the walrus to his mouth, and began to pump it full of air again. Drunk on love, I watched the walrus grow larger and larger, until it seemed as if it were floating above me, threatening to fall and smother me, like some crazy cartoon character—the mighty Popeye, the lovesick Olive Oyl—who floated above Broadway that fatal day Rosalie and I acknowledged it was all over, after marching what seemed like forever in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade.

Totems

Purloined, preserved,
the doorposts of the Haida soar
toward the louvered glass skylight
of the anthropology museum.

Fangs red in the cedarwood,
the brown bear on his elbows
crouches like a sphinx on the tile.
He's clan and family, avuncular,
his sagging jaw familiar.

When Raven pried open the shell
found on the beach at sunrise,
the first people emerged
blinking, rubbing their eyes.
Over them, the huge
feathered shadow hovered,
unable to decide
whether to leave them or eat them.

In time no more than a crow,
he dabbles among gulls
who was once Creator and speech-
maker, who warbled
like orioles in the branches
until his throat closed.
He taught us cawing and silence,
woes, and the world in a shell.

Pass through this doorway
with its frogs and beavers climbing
sill to lintel
and there's nowhere else
except vision, a forest
of Sitka spruce and dark hemlock
looming from the origins
and a bear you know by his grin.

E.G. Burrows

Maybe

Maybe a great soft warm hand
will catch you.
Maybe broken shadows will swarm you
and suck your fear like leeches.
Maybe there is light and a choir.
Maybe there is a hammer
and a pile of rocks.

Maybe you stand on gravel under stars.
Crickets rasp
and a corkscrew pod of clicking bats
hunts the reef of light beneath
a pole in the barnyard down the road.
A dog barks.

Now you are awake, in this moment.
There is nowhere you need to go
but this is good going.
Maybe this will last.
Maybe not.

Dennis Sipe

Barcelona

The huge granite statues
are sleeping in the square

deep in the white powder
that falls from the stars.

On the baker's long mahogany table
a warm blue glow surrounds
the bread and the oranges.

The woman at the table
is reaching deep into a white sack
as if looking for a secret hidden there.

And there they are!
The stars themselves,
specks of light glittering
in the handful of flour.

Crush them, a voice whispers,
you must crush them!

And you hear them now, can't you?
Snapping like weevils between her fingernails?

But listen.

How quiet it is in the doorway.

The sound of rain
drifting up from the city.

And the smell of men—

the smell of rain on stone.

Anthony Sobin

After a Tracheotomy

for Anna—

Who took away her voice, hiding it
in an ostrich egg, keeping it waiting in a small,
blue truck, planting it among rhododendrons
on the slopes of the Himalayas.

Orange leaves are missing.
Perhaps the earth gave her voice
to the stones
because they are orphaned.

Perhaps her voice lives in kitchens where teakettles
whistle and the sounds are immense and white
as Jostedalstreen.

Perhaps, when the last bus leaves,
her voice will ride North past farm houses, villages
haunted by good deeds, the wind of her passing
riffling the hair of a lost Cree.

Breathe—Anna. Breathe. Lungs open
like almonds. Norwegian's whittled
tuneless. English is skinned eels. The sky chokes back
winter. Winter adopted her voice.
Loud as smoke, fringed with
consonants.

Vowelless, her life in exchange
for the trachea's
spliced rope.

Gayle Elen Harvey

My Boy

I want to date Elroy Jetson
now that he's old enough to drive that space car.
I want to go with him in that bubble-topped craft
to a bar tucked in his corner of the galaxy.
Our first date we'd go to the oblong building
circled by supports that don't touch ground,
with lights flashing *Neptune's.*
I'd wear one of sister Judy's outfits,
she'd do my hair in a curly ponytail.
Judy'd teach me how to dance in the air
to Eep Op Orp, her prize winning song.
I'd make sure I got invited over for one of Jane's
famous wall-ready meals,
I'd dine next to Mr. Spacely and his sprockets.

Back on my front porch
I'd let Elroy kiss me goodnight.
He'd marvel at the height of the pecan,
the lipstick pink of the azalea.
I'd show him the age of my house,
the uneven boards, the way the windows stick
or fall, the heat grate in the floor.
He'd be charmed to finger
my antique teacups, the sugar bowl, the creamer.
He'd come toward me quickly in front of my new microwave
and I'd allow him to know the age of my other wares,
whispering in his well-drawn ear, words like "Elroy,
my adolescent time traveler,
speed me a love that is ageless."

Elroy would return to his galaxy
and I'd surprise him with handwritten letters
and other archaic forms of communication,
like souvenir postcards.
He'd land on my roof every weekend. We'd hold hands.
We'd spoon. He'd bring me genetically
engineered flowers, music by bands
yet unborn, an electric cat named Pollux,
and I'd let him climb the thick magnolia
right in front of my door.

Heather Leigh Johnson

Catechism

1
It was my last year for dreaming
of Priesthood. Cathy Morin moved in front
of me that year, and her strawberry hair ruined every hope
my eyes had for the altar. Hair
the color of the Hail Mary beads on my rosary.
Breasts that'd just begun their miracle.

2
So I'd kneel, glaring at the blue
and innocent angels in stone.
What is this, I thought, knowing
no answer was coming from those
or even the distant pitiful thing
hanging with arms flung and the nails in.

3
Saturdays I'd waken early, and by then
I'd been working three years for Greenwell.
Long enough to take the White
Oliver tractor alone to the May fields.
With the sea-gulls wheeling and calling back of me,
I'd sit there and try to keep the lines straight, and try
not to think of them grabbing at the seeds
or about the dust kicking me in the face.
The old engine shook each joint and every bone
and I learned how our Father of Dust loves
each tooth in the empty mouth that longs
for bread or breast, salvation
traded for longing and unendurable desire.

Thomas Marron

Uncle George

Uncle George was crushed by a truck.
It was ironic
considering he had just married
at fifty-six
years old because he was
finally in love
with someone.
(A blonde forty-eight year old
cashier at Snow White Coffee Shop
on Kings Highway.)
She wept and none of his relatives
believed her.
They could not see how
anyone could love George.
After all, he was a bachelor
and possibly probably
tough to live with, with
the painting of his mother
straight over the couch,
and the neat ways he tucked
things in places and how
he cooked his little dinners
of beans and breads
and listened to Count Basie
too loud every night.
He mowed the small yard with
a manual lawn mower and wore
a brown fedora and gray trousers.
But she made him happy
for fourteen months.
They were happy and made
each other happy, although
she chewed gum and laughed too loud.
George's brothers and their wives
did not like her.
She never went to college.
The fact that George never went
did not matter. He was self-made
with a Brooklyn trucking business.
He had to pay off union officials.
He hollered at his men.
His face was like a concrete block.
He was happy with Shirley for fourteen months,
and no one knew it but Shirley
who was heartbroken, heartbroken for good.

Daniel Sklar

The Perfection Clerk

for David

My student said she knows a man
who works as a perfection clerk.
Where does he keep his files?
I wanted to ask her, having a few
items to add: the northern wind
shivering the needles of this pine
now, at eight o'clock this morning;
the sprinkle of chickadee sounds
outdoors; the beagle's lop-sided
tapdance across the kitchen floor
to retrieve a sock; morning light
blue on the snow; and, of course,
how you smile when I tell you this.

Susan Rea

Ether

"Blow up the balloon," the nurse said,
but it wasn't a balloon;
it was dark and still
like a stopped heart,
and I was blowing myself into it.
I was eight years old,
and I was sick.
Somebody wanted me dead.
Not the nurse, that gamp,
but someone close, someone bad.
There wasn't any pill
to cure what I had.
No nurse could vamp
me with her fake toys.
I took oblivion straight. Yes,
now it can be told.
That was a treat,
that little cup of death,
heavy but so sweet.

Susan Rea

Irises

for Caitlin at four years

With starlings chattering in thin green elms
And the sky open and wind cool as mint,

We stop before a bed of irises
To look and touch, then holding, breathe their scent

Of Nu-Grape soda pop, their yellow stripes
Of caterpillar hair like boas on petals

Fluttering, frilly, delicate old floozies—
Common as sparrow and worm, their fierce mettle

Is barely concealed under last year's bed
Of leaves and parchment husks, from which they thrust

The spearhead leaves and the bloom-weighted stalks,
Offering sun their freight of golden dust.

You ask me why some of the blooms have dried,
Collapsed like face erased to skull, their stems

And petals shriveled tight as umbilical cord
Around a finger stalk, transfixing them:

In bones I feel the answer's earth and air,
"Because death feeds life," and point to

A bud's corolla unfurling purple-sheened
As congealed blood: see how it's driven through

Air from below by rootstock ravenous
For more color, more black-fire debris.

You praise the balance of this formula,
Accepting joy and the factory.

I concur, knowing nothing else to do,
Surrounded by the blackness of deep space,

Presented with these gifts of bright flower
And brilliant daughter at this time, in this place.

Rawdon Tomlinson

Splitting Pine

I heft the sledge above my head
and swing it down squarely against
the wedge ringing, log bucking apart
clean and white as a sliced apple,
sun-flesh no man has seen.

No analysis today: I toss
the knotted ones into a pile
where they can lie until I'm cold;
I know the way of will,
how wedges bury and axe binds

in twisted grain, against whorled spikes
of branches hard as hate,
the pain stored in that dumb matter
a lifetime's secret bludgeoning guilt,
daggers of *if*. Today I'm after

the tone of honest work, heart song,
the sapling core from which all rings
ripple to light full-flamed
as the aspen leaves' yellow desire,
a drowsy rasping in smoky weeds.

Sun and work burn into shoulders,
sweating armpits and crotch
(the slabs will stack snug as quatrains):
each unflinching stroke flows
from eye to hand fusing muscles

and bones to a wave outrunning thought,
seams riven from inside
exploding a bouquet of resin,
momentum's edge holding the beat
like a wheel spinning standing still.

Rawdon Tomlinson

For Sale

"Just Divorced," reads the window sign,
"The judge says everything must be sold."
And there they are, lined up like
custody's children: Tables, chairs,
pots and pans, plates, margarita glasses,
strings of pearls, a belly dancer's
shimmy chain, Bill Cosby records
all at one-time-only prices and I wish
that my parents had known to do this,
cash in early, hand-paint a sign and
summon the neighborhood to settle this thing:
the bed that absorbed my father's lies
stripped to the mattress and price-tagged on the porch,
stacked photo frames sponged clean of memory,
innocent as cafeteria trays,
our car priced to move, sold and gone
before it could carry perplexed children
on outings with his mistresses,
the house stripped board by board
its hauntings swept to wind,
my parents warmly shaking hands, dividing the proceeds
of our family's better years
and handing each child a large check
with which we could run and shop
for anything,
anything we wanted.

Bruce A. Jacobs

Sustenance

The house sags with the weight of food.
He brings tomatoes large as cantaloupe,
cherries plump and round as apricots,
bread crumbling in thick brown disks.
Already, canned goods tower shakily,
spaghetti stacks the shelves,
olives and pickles march the counter,
an army in brine.

Sometimes he brings whole lambs—
carcasses bloody from the butcher's hook
trundled quickly past the bleating
at the door. Whacking strokes
of his cleaver fill the air,
meat severed from bone by hands
blunt and strong as clubs.
Bone chips fly. At his feet
the cats prowl, bright predators.

Chunking meat for the broiler,
he fingers tendons and ligaments,
searches out bone's buried message,
skewers the raw flesh, draws it
sizzling and redolent from the flame.
Sopping bread in the fragrant juices,
square hands heft food to mouth
with enormous satisfaction.

While he eats, she works wearily,
wrapping meat in thick white paper,
stacking labelled packages for the freezer's
frigid plenitude; chops, ribs, stew meat,
heart a quiet stone.
Her hands are soft and vulnerable.
Where the knife slices her thumb,
she puts her tongue to the cut,
tastes acrid blood,
chokes it down.

Lisa Suhair Majaj

We Are Looking for a Sign

Ye who do not seek
shall not find

We are looking for a sign—
a burning bush, a limp phoenix
rising from the ash would be fine.
Particular, we're not, we don't require
firecrackers or the miraculous, no need
for flash, impertinent acts, comets
and tidal waves need not apply.

We are looking for a sign—
we'd settle for something subtle,
a small oversight
at the bank, a call
from a friend, the right glass of wine,
a stray cat, one night, perhaps
one night of uninterrupted sleep.

We are looking for a sign—
and weeks pass. Our dog dies, days
and nights end in rain (no thunder):
a sewer of damp heat, books shrivel
in our hands, conversations,
even with neighbors, decline,
evenings end wriggling
on separate sides of our bed.

We are looking for a sign:
Ye who seek shall certainly find.

Robert Brown

Point and Shoot

Another tourist clutches the railing;
The scene inflicts that touch of vertigo
That makes a thousand-mile drive worthwhile.
Looked down on, time's prolific as the sea.
Across this summer's gorge, the layers fan out
From Ordovician to van der Rohe,
Establishing the backdrop and the floor
For snapshots of ourselves on top of things.

Dan Campion

Spirit Catcher I

Sit me down
in a blue mauve place
stretch me across
yr ivory canvas lap
stroke my cheek
with a sable brush
smear oil and water
on my chest
hum prismic paens
blow melody over my damp skin
cast a shadow spell
splash my soul
on the wall
and leave it there to dry

Robert Earl Price

Fayette

The waves speak,
one hand clapping
on the ringing stones.

Stubborn against gravity,
cliff pines gnarl out
from the limestone
and offer no shade.

Our feet are unsure
on the fallen stones
smoothed round by
these rhythms, slippery
with life simpler than ours.

I pick my way,
the others behind,
to pass the bend.

There are only
so many days
in this life.

John Peter Beck

Mt. St. Angelo, in the Artists' Barn

for Robbie Tillotson

These are the mornings of yoga,
herb tea and the prayer wheel.
At the studio window he studies weather
and watches the sourwoods
and maples bleed and bullion
as they prepare for the hour
of rust and ice of the sterner season.

He has hardly the vigor
to mix the cadmiums and alizarin,
to lift the blur brushes and pinpoint
Winsors with camel hair finer
than needles. Something in the blood
is hungry and thinner
than water. At the easel
he suffers the colors toward form,
makes his painted ladies shine
with Tribeca's neon, bangles
and the desperate innocence of dawn.

The weathercock's swivel
aches, metal on metal in the wind,
and he remembers candlelight,
the sweet touch of silk
and wine. It was Piaf torching
on the stereo nightly and elegant
friction of two torsos
finding a motion lovelier and more wild
than Jacob holding the angel.

These are the afternoons of surrender,
the weariness that gnaws
from within, where time is the assailant
and memory hope's only friend.
Halloween coming on, he can
smile at the gaunt face thrown back
by a shadowed window,
while outside the Chinese elm
dances its own slow death,
the sap too afflicted to mend.

In the slender moon's first gold,
he cleans the brushes with turpentine
and contemplates the portrait's
lively eyes. He is free from the fear
of stray vapors or angina,
but the Red Death is waiting in maples.
Pine needles drift and the wind
sighs like a lover in the thicket.

These are the evenings of healing tea,
meager dinner and a short stroll,
vines thick as i.v. tubes
twisting, labored breath in the arbor,
the colors subtle or lost
in the dusk. He feels the empty space,
fatigue. A crow shrills caution
from the elm. An artist
is looking for comfort, a skeleton

is looking for flesh. The flavor
of late fog rising is acrid,
harsh and marrowless. In the last
gallery where no critics smirk
nor patrons coo and grin, under the moon's
cold eye and the test of time,
it is the taste of inspired regret
that marries the fire within.

R.T. Smith

Butterfly Effect

Fooled by this mid-winter
reprieve, an onyx-winged
aristocrat has shed his
pendant chrysalis to settle

on a patch of rye grass
where the yard stirs
toward the year's first
green, and there he fans

his wings' white fringe
and scalloped margins
to warm up and seek
sustenance from pollen,

carrion or sap. God knows
why he has gnawed through
the cocoon to emerge
ghostly and awkward as

a pharaoh from the tomb,
but he is intricately
splendid with his scarlet
bars and black mantle.

Design science suggests
the turbulence of his wings
like a mighty king's single
word can alter the wind

to trigger blizzards or stop
a monsoon halfway across
the world—the butterfly effect.
And when the royal insect

has revved up and fled,
the quartet of wings beating
marvelously as any heart,
the weather somewhere will

be altered and my garden
will relapse to the spare
harmony of mid-February,
and perhaps by sunset this

specimen will already be dead
again, the season's martyr
rising stiff in the black
beak of the jay currently

circling, his appetite drawn
by an atmospheric change, my
own attention or, in sun shafts
of false spring, a symmetry

of bright wings warming.

R.T. Smith

How night came in

Temperatures sliding off the nineties,
the breeze steady and rising one summer
when you were still a kid, hours from curfew
and headed for the beach, the boardwalk, the lights
of the rides and arcade that came on just for you,
the sun going down and you
not knowing
how night came in at Coney
Island and Seaside Heights, the sweet, salt dark
of sex and damp and silence rushing, the eely tidal
marsh where all the rides and all the games were free,
where no one knew till later how chilled they were,
or bitten
the way time rode you all that night,
the wild mouse screaming over the sea, how you drank
the darkness and spit it out, how the ocean swelled and lifted
you up, how it filled you full and emptied you,
held you and let you go.

Phebe Davidson

Gymnast

Sleek as otter or lynx
She vaults near the lights
That hang in cages from the ceiling,
Arcs in perfect flight
Her physical insights
Or tumbles their echoes across the floor.
Beneath her taut sheath,
Barely containing
The thin convention of skin,
She ripples with life
Like our original sea.
Not erotic, only perfect,
Her material soul can stretch
My fabric of desire
Until it threatens every seam

Arcing through my echoing vaults
Here among the gawking crowd,
One of the attentive bears who hulk and yearn
For flesh so fitted with its own idea
That to move is but to think out loud.

But I will settle for well-muscled words
Poised for impossible springs
Between immovable bars,
Arms and legs drilled deep
Into the heart,
Angled knees and elbows swept in curves
Above all beams wooden and inert,
All bars too parallel
And iron rings too cold,
To find the flight above them all
That unsentences the soul,
When the word rises from the killing floor
To dance through a woman's limbs
In single celebration: the grace
That settles over skin.

Michael D. Riley

Contributors' Notes

Enid Litwak Baron, former co-editor of *Rhino*, has poems in *The Literary Review*, *California Quarterly* and *Sing, Heavenly Muse!* Her book *Baking Days* will be published by HCE/riverrun arts in 1994. She recently completed her first novel, *Remembering the Alamo*.

John Peter Beck has published in *Louisville Review*, *Passages North*, *5 AM*, and *Woodrose*. He teaches at the School of Labor and Industrial Relations at Michigan State University.

Gay Brewer is an assistant professor at Middle Tennessee State University, where he edits the journal *Poems & Plays*.

Robert Brown teaches in the English Department at Kent State University.

E.G. Burrows' recent collections include *The House of August* (Ithaca House 1985) and *Handsigns for Rain* (Wayland Press 1989), plus poetry publications in *Ascent*, *Blue Mesa*, *Birmingham Poetry Review*, and *Ohio Poetry Review*. He lives in Edmonds, Washington.

Gerald N. Callahan is Associate Professor of Immunology at Colorado State University. His poems have appeared in *Puerto del Sol*, *Midwest Quarterly*, *Phase and Cycle*.

Dan Campion lives in Iowa City, Iowa.

Turner Cassity, recently retired from Emory University Library, divides his time between Georgia and California. He is the recipient of grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Ingram Merrill Foundation, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His most recent volume is *Between the Chains* (1991) from the University of Chicago Press.

Michael Chitwood is published in *Poetry*, *The Southern Review*, *Threepenny Review*, *Virginia Quarterly Review* and others. His book, *Salt Works*, was published by Ohio Review Books.

Rita Ciresi's collection of short stories, *Mother Rocket*, won the Flannery O'Connor Award for Short Fiction. She is an assistant professor at Hollins College.

Jerry Cullum is a free lance cultural critic, Atlanta correspondent for *Sculpture*, art reviewer for the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, and associate editor of *Art Papers*. (P.O. Box 77348, Atlanta GA 30357).

Tenaya Darlington is in the fiction program at Indiana University.

Phebe Davidson edits the Palanquin/TDM Poetry Series and teaches English at the University of South Carolina-Aiken. She has poems in *Nimrod*, *Poetry East*, and *The Literary Review*. She has two volumes, *Milk and Brittle Bone* (1991) and *Two Seasons* (1993) from Muse-Pie Press, and a third, *Dreameater*, forthcoming.

Derek Economy is a psychotherapist in Atlanta, Georgia. His writing has appeared in *Voices* and *Pilgrimage*, and will be forthcoming later this year in *Georgia Journal*.

Jack Evans' collection of poems, *The Catfood Factory*, was just published by Pygmy Forest Press. The owner of two used record stores in Boston and Cambridge, he has poems in *Chicago Review*, *Manhattan Poetry Review*, and *Boston Literary Review*.

Charles Fishman is Director of the Visiting Writers Program at SUNY Farmingdale.

Neva Vinetta Hacker is former director, now consultant, at a shelter for victims of domestic violence in Harrison, Arizona. Her poetry has appeared in *Contemporary Women Poets*, *Denver Quarterly*, *and Webster Review*.

Gayle Elen Harvey is a "Lifer in the Kingdom of Utica," artist's model and data entry clerk at a hospital. She won second prize in the '92 Chester H. Jones Foundation national poetry contest. She received a New York Foundation for the Arts fellowship, and has poems in *Exquisite Corpse*, *Negative Capability*, *IQ-International Quarterly* and others.

Jack Hayes, winner of *Zone 3's* Rainmaker Prize, writes: "As Norman Cousins said, I am one of four billion cells in a body called mankind— this is all that matters at this moment. I've been married thirty years. I've outlived tribalisms and allegiances, but I will die a small man just like everyone. I thank my parents for the wounding, and the luck of love and healing."

David Hightower lives and teaches in Cassville, Georgia.

Daniel Hoffman is a former Consultant in Poetry of The Library of Congress. He presented the reading last December by the Nobel Laureates in poetry—Joseph Brodsky, Czeslaw Milosz, Octavio Paz, and Derek Walcott—and Rita Dove, Poet Laureate of the United States, at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City.

Tiff Holland's poem "Ghost Month" is dedicated to her dad, Robert T. Holland. She did indeed get married in January 1994. She works as a claims adjuster for Nationwide Insurance and has poems in *Kalliope*, *The Coventry Review*, *Artcrimes*, and the anthology *A Gathering of Poets* (Kent State). Mail: 1137 Waterloo Rd., Mogadore, OH 44260.

Peter Huggins' numerous publications include *Colorado Review*, *Cumberland Poetry Review*, and *Southern Humanities Review*. He was a Tennessee Williams Scholar at the Sewanee Writers' Conference.

Bruce A. Jacobs is a free lance writer, poet and hired hand on a horse farm in Maryland. He was 1993 First Runner-Up in the National Faux Faulkner contest.

Heather Leigh Johnson is an M.F.A. graduate student at Georgia State University.

Seaborn Jones has poems in *Snake Nation Review*, *New York Quarterly*, and *Xanadu* and is anthologized in *80 on the 80's, A Decade's History in Verse* (Ashland U. Press), and the Chester H. Jones National Poetry Competition Winners 1993. He was the Alan Collins Scholar in Poetry at the 1991 Bread Loaf Writers Conference.

Philip Kobylarz has poems appearing in *Michigan Quarterly Review*, *Epoch*, and *Santa Monica Review* among others.

Lisa Suhair Majaj lives in Somerville, Massachusetts.

Thomas Marron is currently living in a cabin outside Fairbanks, Alaska, and finishing the M.F.A. program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Eric Nelson teaches English and Creative Writing at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro. His poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *Shenandoah*, *The Southern Review* and many other journals. His most recent book, *The Interpretation of Waking Life*, was published in 1991 by the U. of Arkansas Press as winner of the Arkansas Poetry Award.

Robert Parham's collection *The Low Fires of Keen Memory* will appear this year from Colonial Press. Published or forthcoming in *Harvard Magazine*, *Georgia Review*, *Southern Humanities Review*, and *Lullwater Review*.

Sarah Patton has published in *The Wisconsin Review*, *The Little Magazine*, and *Poetpourri* and has two chapbooks, *The Earth Can't Forget* (Wilderness Press) and *The Roses* (Light Source Press). Mail: Rt. 1, Box 711, Center Point, Texas 78010.

Sherman Pearl lives in Santa Monica, California.

Robert Earl Price, Playwright in Residence at Atlanta's 7 Stages Theater, has won an NEA Fellowship, Bronze Jubilee Award and the Georgia Poetry Circuit touring fellowship.

Geri Radacsi, associate director of University Relations at Central Connecticut State University, has appeared in *Embers*, *Poetpourri*, and *Connecticut Review* and been anthologized in the *National Library of Poetry* and *Our Common Voice*.

Susan Rea teaches at Community College of Philadelphia, and has received several fellowships from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. Her poetry appears in *American Scholar*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, and *Passages North*. She lives in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, with her husband and son.

Michael D. Riley lives in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Margaret Robison has two books, *Red Creek* (Amherst Writers & Artists Press 1992), and *The Naked Bear* (Lynx House Press/Panache Books 1977). She has taught writing

in the schools, to women in prison, and currently to women with disabilities. Poems have appeared in *Ploughshares*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *Yankee*, and *Disability Rag*.

Larry Rubin teaches English at Georgia Tech and has published three volumes, with U. of Nebraska; Harcourt, Brace & World; and Godine. His poems have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Harper's Magazine*, *Poetry*, *Sewanee Review*, *Yale Review*, *Kenyon Review*, and many anthologies, including *The Norton Introduction to Literature* (W.W. Norton 1991) and *A Geography of Poets* (Bantam Books 1979).

Dennis Sipe is "trying to live in S. Indiana." He has a chapbook, *My Days Are Stray Dogs that Won't Come when I Call*, and has poems in *American Writing*, *Louisville Review*, *Wind*, and *Permafrost*. Mail: 4897 N. Water Tower Rd., Austin, IN 47102.

Daniel Sklar teaches writing at Endicott College. His plays, poems and stories have been published and performed.

Charlie Smith, a Georgia native, is author of four books of poetry, including *Before and After*, forthcoming from W.W. Norton in early 1995. He has also published four novels and a book of novellas. He lives in New York City.

R.T. Smith's new collection, *Trespasser*, will be published in Ireland, where he spent the summer of '94 on an Arts International grant from the U.N.

Jack Stewart was educated at the U. of California at Davis and the U. of Alabama. He is currently a Brittain Fellow at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Ted Taylor teaches at Mercy College and is working on a doctoral dissertation on Virginia Woolf at Rutgers. He is married to the artist, N.C. Gordon, and has three cats. "If I have a poetic credo, it's clarity. (Poems should be read, not solved.)"

Rawdon Tomlinson's book, *Deep Red*, will appear in the U. of Central Florida's Contemporary Poetry Series. He has poems forthcoming in *Kansas Quarterly* and *Birmingham Poetry Review*.

Diane Wald teaches at The Art Institute of Boston and Northeastern U. A chapbook of her prose poems, *My Hat That Was Dreaming*, was recently published by The Literary Renaissance. Mail: 52 Paine St. Boston, MA 02131.

Claude Wilkinson, a widely exhibited visual artist, won the 1993 Whittington Prize for painting from Cottonlandia Museum. Published in *Albatross*, *Poem*, and *Wind*, he lives in Nesbit, Mississippi.

Lisa Horton Zimmerman lives in Fort Collins, Colorado.

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