

COE REVIEW

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RICK ADKINS

Last of the Abortive Mothers

American shorts have an
instinctive odor.

They clutch the butts of
stick men and squeeze the
crotch of red-lit cities.

They mirror closet cankerings
and ooze arthritic gels to
glaze pringles hot from
resurrection assaults.

They shroud the pasteurized
hoopla of one final tremor
and shout a blindfire fever
roar.

They glow in strained
glimpses and spattered
inklings that raise proceeds
(Enclose check made payable
to the Abortive Mothers Fund.)

RICK ADKINS

Remnants of St. Elmo

In the cleft of a dribble morning,
sliced precisely be picket fence
stiles, I swill stiffnecked potions
and gloss the cap its daily rubbing.

Midcycle poisons have faulted thin
leather soles not used to gravel
road remnants, but I paste them
tight and pause to imprint the
drizzle gauge and measure stick
that blur new drippings of my
moulting eccentricia

slow wood shoots run down
hole filled murphy dreams
of vein streaked leftover
etchings as wife-held fallen
fantasies adorn weeded once
before flower clumps

and I walk the remnant road with
cart track bent rail traces. A
dusting 1907 Buick sits in the town's
old livery, while whorehouse shacks
develop an ancient French disease.
One locked ball and chain presides
over looted cells, and I risk a glimpse
of the tie it holds to taunted miner nights.

Nickel stars choke with a
vacant glance of don't or
that ball and chain will
be a right nice fit on

the legs of...

Knockings flavor toasted odors as I
decipher half-faded window smears.
They clear the blur and soak tinted
floor beams with smelted fancies that
used to pay by tons. Saloon ruins jerk
away the pressure stare and begin to
leak a parchment yip,

barmaids clanka bonk and a
silver coronet band ranks
near bottom on lists of
coming events

but pebble thorns cancel my unchewed
inventory, and as I prod what's left
the shacks point me back and I live
with the scuttled relics of my 1907
Tuesday mood.

RICK ADKINS

The Amalgamated Western

For instance, the amalgamated western. Seen only once, and then by little nippers in scrap leather. Even their mothers were saddled. Jokingly, but not lightly. No different than any other twenty acre homestead, except for the hide-a-bed. They had nipple itch. Looked like mellons. Well, water balloons. Men called them organ grinders. Laughed about that. Kept mentioning empty bottles and something like “paternity juice” and hot pot bellied stoves. Couldn’t catch it all though. Must be acne, cause they always act like it’s not there.

ALAN BRITT

Landscape 4

the wedding has taken place
in a closed room
between the tangerine scent and a worm

ALAN BRITT

Landscape 10

a road marker is carrying a dead man by his shirt
a man at an afternoon luncheon is drinking the eyebrows
of a pornographic poster
someone is watering the garden beside a condemned house
the mandatory popular songs are being played on a porch-step
a bird lies dead on a raindrop.

LAWRENCE M. BURKE

THE BIRCHWOOD



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LAWRENCE M. BURKE
THE BIRCHWOOD
LAWRENCE M. BURKE

BRIAN LODGE

LAWRENCE M. BURKE

The Meal

We sit here in
The early hours our
Hands
Folded

Like paper
Only
Plainly clearer our

Eyes fixed and unbreathing
As the note of a horn they
Do not

Conceal the
Cold

Silence vanishing in the cracks of the night
I

Cannot charge the moment calling
Around me Terror
The truth moving
On both feet
In you
At a distance I
Believe it now the

Shrinking stain of truth the
Eyelid

That bears
Me In its slow heal of
Moments

LAWRENCE M. BURKE

The Distance of Cities

Who are taught the music of
The city are not lost they
Enter foreheads low like winter

The city is their debt it is
Each time
They breathe
A
Memory of owing not with

Forgiveness not
With bitterness not with
Looking not with finding the

City does not teach these
Questions its
True lesson they
Do not choose out of their hours they

Have

Nothing they are the
Cities

Shelves it moves them under
Yellow square of daylight it piles

Them like toys it

Leaves them with nothing
These lucky ones these half
Hidden white marks on
A
White wall

LAWRENCE M. BURKE

To the Silence Kept Awake by the Moon

The world has been ashamed for years these
Things happen these
Shames
It cherishes for a time they
Go away like trash they
Take

Their way in
The
Daybreak these shames with

Their many tongues they do not like to be
Forgotten
It is proud of its shames

It
Has made with
Its triumphs that

It

Strings like ribbons that
It crosses itself by that
It betrays with
Reason

The shames of conduct a
Corps of
Forgiveness

It

Is what you are they
Say

CRAIG A. CHURCHWOOD

For I Wanted To Dance / April Jeans Two

(Fly on, butterfly, fly on)
For five years now,
 and maybe thirteen before,
to the stage manager
 I have slipped my request,
asking him if the band would not play
 for I wanted to dance.

He never responded,
 except for not answering,
so I left him there
 on the wooden ballroom floor
flying away to the springtime sun in the sky
 for I wanted to dance.

Wings spread I flew,
 arrayed with wisps of cirrus,
while laughing with Heaven's Angels
 at the western march of Cortez;
Afterwards, I lit the sunsets consummation fire
 for I wanted to dance.

(Fly on, butterfly, fly on.)

 We strode,
off the early autumn road,
to Walden Zero.

 Feet in the creekmud,
 flowering among daffodils,

birch and scrubwood arches,
home-nest of gray rodents, down
to the meadow between the legs of
a strong shouldered *Alces americanus*

While two mallards
dodged the reeds of
next month's crystallized pond,
a cried-out, laughing man, put hand grasps
of elephant grass

in your hair.
Smile.

Even though I captured a thorn
in one pair of our barefeet,
I still would
pick dandelions
anytime
with you.

Fly on, butterfly, fly on.
On worn April Jeans.

ALBERT DRAKE

Fixing A Flat In Iowa

The truck tips to its shadow.
Grey clouds well from the west,
and the air has the smell of rain.
Traffic rocks me with each shush of wind.
Something in the gothic flatness threatens
as I stand int the continent's center
hearing across the endless horizon
the hooves of buffalo; my jack
is raised like a weapon.

ALBERT DRAKE

from Riding Bike in the 'Fifties

Sensations:

the bike shop walls are plastered
with old photos/ racers and riders
they grin in baggy clothes

a bottle of beer in each upraised hand
their women wear rosey the riveter slacks
flat track racers/ outlaw riders
board track racers/ hill climb champions
where are they now?

dead on a dished-out track
a dished-out bed/ or selling spark plugs
I look in the photos for my father
he would be on a pre-war Indian/ Harley
white jodhpurs/ high boots/ white cap
I recall the war/ he worked
in shipyards/ Swan Island/ Oregon yard
he had only a B ration sticker
rode to the swing shift to save gas
he said they raced a cop every night
thundering through war-time streets
hand shift/ marble knob/ suicide clutch
came home one morning hand bleeding/ legs
scraped/ to miss a streetcar on wet tracks
he laid her down/ and walked away
from that one

ALBERT DRAKE

Columbia River Gorged

The river glows, charged with the current
of neon salmon. Hood river blazes,
and the freeway is a bright, fast four-lane boardwalk.
Under thirty feet of water Celilo Falls ripples,
another treaty forever broken; on the hill
workers sleep uneasily, dreaming of Indians
What would Woodie Guthrie say now?

Above in darkness is the old WPA highway,
bridges and guard rail of hand-fitted stone.
Only years ago I drove it with my father,
the river mysteriously dark, almost undammed,
charged with it's own secret current.

WILLIAM J. GALLAGHER

Death Ship

The Death Ship floats in the bathtub
like a rubber duck.
The skull and crossbones
shine like an iodine label.
The pirate capitain stomps across the deck,
abruptly spins on his wooden leg,
squints his good right eye
in perspective glass
and, muttering, orders a broadside
volley, in antique international gibberish.

My son, a year old yesterday,
splashes with delight at his new toy,
seizes it, and stuffs it in his mouth.
Before I can Knock it away,
before I can even shout, "No,"
I smell the powder burning on his tongue
and watch the tiny flash inside his mouth.

I am screaming as the ship
slips down the drain
Loaded with teeth.

WILLIAM J. GALLAGHER

Remembering When I Wasn't Married

I know there was a room
where I never vacuumed the carpet,
but I kept the bathroom spotless,
I bought dishes, cookware,
a used refrigerator, a cot.
I brought my tiny portable TV from home.

Eventually, I had to get an electric can opener.
I lived out of cans, but I hated
to grind them open.
Yet, in spite of the convenience,
I could never stomach frozen food.

Every time a plane roared overhead
I ran outside to look at it.
In that room I watched the first moon landing,
three World Series, two Superbowls,
the invasion of Cambodia,
but although I learned a lot there
about shutting up and closing my mind,
I didn't leave much spirit.
I never entertained, never had company.
Just some friends' friends who needed a bunk.
I have a feeling I embraced them,
or tried to, during the night,
but they were too polite to tell me.

WILLIAM J. GALLAGHER

Events Of My Life

When I was 46 my wife died
in a department store explosion.
A week later I married Lana Turner.

I had six sons,
all of them career army officers.
Two of them were killed in hostile action.

When I started selling real estate
we didn't muck around with fair housing
laws, or FHA, or redevelopment.
We were building something,
a country you could sink your teeth into.

The first million was the toughest.

Sex, we had sex.

I would prefer not to discuss the divorce,
or my first wife either.

I've thought of retiring, but what can I do?
I'm a working man.
I'd only be a nuisance to myself.
I can't hang around a library
or watch soap operas.
If I had my wish,
I'd die with a phone in my hand,
grabbing a fast sandwich-lunch.

EMILY GLEN

With Presents

They come into my dressing-room with presents,
 Even best-friend diamonds,
 The usual flowers,
But I turn on to your offbeat gifts,
 Snapshot of a deer by a brook,
 A bayberry frog,
Picture of Burnhardt
 In pants suit of her own design,
 Flower of beads for my hair,
Postage-stamp falcon

EMILY GLEN

Timey Tell

Doll all mine
 Timey Tell the newest
She has a watch you can set
 To hear her schedule
With a tinkly alarm
 Like flower-bells ringing
Every minute on the minute
 Timey tells me what to do for her
 Feed me
 Comb my hair
 Wash my face
 Tie my shoe
Fun fun no fun
 Minutes a lot of little bugs
Crawling all over me
 When I want to go out and play
Such a honey-candy doll
 But I kick her across the room
 Kick hard as I can
She lets go with all her timey tells
 In squeaks and squishes
How could you of course they say
 Mama and my Aunts
 And both my Grandmothers
 And Papa when he comes home
How could you
 How could you
I could

LLOYD GOLD

The Buttons

You don't like them?
I can understand why.

Once they were the thing.
Belonged to father and
he father. the brash
was all shine, the cloth
nubby and elegantly muted.
During father's day
they lost it.

Now I wear them and think of
grandfather. Tarnished black
with centers frayed and faded
they ease through holes
keeping vests closed.

LLOYD GOLD

zeitgeist

married eleven years
we grew three kids
and lost them
along the way.

in tabloid air
our \$50,000 house
wears us like
an apathetic face.

once we peeled
skin off nights
and scotchsoaked soirees.

your breasts hung
bronze and panting
from natural pearls.

the war goes on
and we buy silence
with illusions
of peroxide.

the nursery is naked.
the curb full of bloody rocks.
night sucks
every new boil.

ARCHIBALD HENDERSON

Requiem: Dumb Jane

Dumb Jane limps off in time with carpet sweepers.
Beneath her breast a mole consents to flower.
Beads thread each eye, the gems of early daughters.
Hips browse the field. toes point another way.

May's jubilee pulls off its red-faced leaves.
Dumb Jane, stem oddly worn, toils cracked bell.
Alarm hoods village squares to bid her pasture.
Dumb Jane, set on by dogs, is foaming stiffly.

Shame, shame, to bit the costly stuff and worship.
Do not, you brothers, push this carriage over.
Its idiot in sky turns gruff and bellows.
Dumb Jane sprawls weedily among the ashes.

ARCHIBALD HENDERSON

Illusions

In that spot you have illusions of
perpetual hear. Even at the heart of ice
you suffocate. Each pore pants for breath. Turn
lamps off; a storm blows up, and lightning throws

millions of watts to zoom the mercury.
You are a trunk of blood. You lean against
the heavy air and pray you do not fall,
break open in the street. A hydrant, hose,
might not steam clean the moody lymph a hyped-up
heart has burst the seams to splash the sidewalk
with - a peacock's tail, all crimson-colored.
Degrees, a filthy manna from the sky,

cling to the flesh like leeches to their host
or the monk's proud abasement, a hair-shirt.
Out of the one furnace you go dripping
only to duck into still one more hell.

if waterfalls of sweat, evaporating,
rose in the sun as cumulus to mark
a cold front stalling and a deluge slaking
the thirst for the low seventies, an end

to weather systems were at hand: a nation
with impunity might colnize the poles-
at worst, erect an igloo in the tropics,
balmy quarters in the arctic, for sick souls.



DENISE BENSON

PAMELA KRES

Oddly Black

Early morning
in the oldest house on Fillmore Street
I was sleeping with my
fat sweet grandma
and trying not to stare
at her teeth stagnating in a glass
by the four-poster bed
when she cackled and said,
oh did I scare you,
I bet you thought your old granny
was dead
and seven years later she got out of
that same feather bed
with a bad stomach ache
and later that week she dies.
And then we were all sitting
in the hazy living room
and the baby pointed
at my grandma who was oddly back
for a visit
and embarrassed us all by asking,
“Who’s that?”

PAMELA KRES

The Trouble with Green Jellybeans

The trouble with green jellybeans
in a child's easter basket
is that they don't taste very good.
and they have nothing to do with Jesus.

PAMELA KRES

Chaucemare

Dark air lunged through stained glass windows
to pummel walnut pews with soft red fists
and a strangely patterned flag
sank heavily to half-mast,
the record turning slowly alone
on the motionless lawn.

She had heavy black hair and sat alone
in the church before a smiling picture of God.

MARY GRAHAM LUND

Acceptance

So I'm a persona?

Nice!

No commitment.

And what a lovely milieu!

No fences, no floors, no

SKY

What beautiful

Statues!

So much easier to

live with

Than flesh and blood!

DONAL MOYER

Walking Down Market Street In Summer--San Francisco

I feel the sunshine on my
city burn the town
down to a singular mirror
held in a little girl's hand,
studying her face for signs
of the approaching woman.

CHRISTOPHER PRYOR

The Carnival

I was just a little boy
And held tightly to my father's hand
As he led me past rows
Of cotton candy
And painted toys.
Large gaudy exhibits
And the penny arced
Down to the far end of the grounds
Where no one seemed to go...
And there we saw the freaks

The fat lady with her husband
Half man, Half woman
A beard and a single breast.
The siamese twins
Grafted at the thigh,
A black India rubber man...
And a living torso.

I heard him before I saw him
Plaintive cries issuing from a basket
Perched atop a piano
Where a man sat and played.
Looking close, I finally saw him
Caught by the music
In a frozen scream
Waving imaginary arms and legs.

The harder he screamed
The louder the man played his piano.
And the torso writhed to a rythm

Until the basket threatened to topple.
Two men came
And carried him crying out
Into a nearby tent.
In a few minutes his crying stopped.
The piano stopped too.

Eating my dinner
I listened to my father
Laugh over the day's events.
Then I left and went to my room,
Where taking off my clothes
I curled up inside my bed
And rocked myself to sleep
Imagining I was the man with no arms or legs.

JAMES RANDALL

Dubious Paradise

In a deep wood
Vivifying rays of the interminable sun
Ease their ways through dewey boughs
To pause on a yawning flower
Which stretches leisurely
And turns to kiss the rays of the warming waves.
A beautiful flower
Emitting perfumed fragrances;
Never to fatally labor
To aromize a stale room,
Nor to sacrificially
Brighten a woman's hair,
Nor to whither dry
On a silent grave.
Safe from envying eyes
And plucking hands,
Free to flourish in it's own way
In a deep wood.

HARLAND RISTAU

Psychology is for the Birds

Listen, we're not in such bad shape;
my cousin's kid is on grass,
the boss is bloated with allergies,
my wife is constipated most of the time -
but how'd you like to be flying
around just waiting for a bastard
like me to tell you that you're
a Magnolia Warbler! Identity crises,
pew! and the plummage of life
is confusing come fall!

JAMES RANDALL



DAVID HOHLE

ALLAN SAFARIC

Orion's Dog-----Sirius

starving dog
gulping chunks of ice
lapping warm pools of blood

gleaming eyes
jawbone and fangs & ribs
shine white

the howling wind
scatters flocks of small birds
scratching in the snow

Building a Fence

there is satisfaction
in pounding long nails
into soft cedar.

the water falls
on smooth stones

yesterday's
words trickle
from the corner
of her lips

a fine blood line

today
she is still asleep

a black clot
in the tangles
of dirty blonde hair

my tongue
in her mouth
extracting
the reason.

ROGER JOE STOUT

Ten Years of Marriage

The path has led to this plank
That might be a bridge across
Dark water. The sun has set,
The moon is obscured by fog.

We cannot go back; the road
We followed already has folded
Into itself. Nor camp here,
For I hear wolves barking.

We do not embrace. I touch
Your arm and you nod, tensely.
We must go single-file,
Footsteps slapping like spent
Fish on the narrow board.

CINDY VEACH

Forever though

Forever though you remain my silver clothed
soldier standing steady with the sun lighting
your body golden. The room remains in ribbons,
the cursed air revolves in mirrors of white
nights reflected across the room, the eaves are
still. I can remember sitting on the couch when
the time was reversed, the city shining with
grandeur into the window. You had spoken into
the water with your mouth red, your hair curly.
Your armour had shown brighter than anything else
on the beach. Your hands had clutched feathers
that you had let fly into the night's white air.
They had taken flight across the space void, you
had watched them with your eyes lighted and
sparkled toward the sky.

The room is smelling of old. the couch is dusty
around my legs. My eyes are centered on yours.
Your hands lie in even circles on your lap. You
are still my knight. You remain always with
ribbons billowing from your mouth in bright
squares and triangles. I smile in the nighttime
whiteness with thoughts of your silver armour
hanging in the closet upstairs.

You are my knight cloted in silver ties.
Your hair blends into the night air, your
hands clutch feathers. You wave them into
the skies. The sand is whipped. the moon
glows white. The water is inked black, it
cracks against the shore. You stand in your
silver armor and curling hair beating your
feet into the sand. Your eyes look up, they

are sparkled with night whiteness. It shines
across your body. Your hands move in circles.
Your voice echoes in ribbons into the the shore.

I sit in the room. It smells old. the
stained couch encloses me. My body feels
fresh with the nighttime. The wind still
comes in through the open window. It brushes
against my knees. You sit across the room.
The night lightness is flashes across your
head in rhythm with the creamy stillness.
Your hair curls against the wall. The ribbons
that echo from your mouth wind around the room
and pile up on the floor. You say that the
night is still grey, the moon hidden. You say
it has been like this before, that we should
walk. We should go down to the sea. I remain
seated. Our bodies seem to float in a warm
void. the bare bulb is bright in the stillness,
the white walls are harsh against our eyes.

We think in thoughts that curl inside our brains
about the white night standing in
swirling ribbons on the beach as the waves crash
against the sand. Desert brush is whipped
against the windows and my knight's armor smold-
ers. But sometimes you stand in my dreams in
foggy lightness against a brilliant pale blue
ocean, holding feathers in your hand the moon
following you, your silver garments flowing onto
the sand. You are my knight and you sit in the
still room whispering in syllables about past
days spent on a city's east side with playgrounds
of colored plastic forms and hazy blowing moons
erected against streets hued in blues and greys.
In an uneasy vocie you whisper about the sea and

your armor hung in a silken case in the closet
upstairs, and the bed with flaxen covers and silver
posts. You speak in ribbons that curse in the
black night's breath.

CINDY VEACH

Dust

The harbor haze smolders over
Grymes hill. Homremans castle
begins to burn in the contin-
uous ashes where it remains. We
feel the burning stones beneath
our feet as we sit in the echo
chamber where wind is turned into
time that is swept into squares
across the floor, and into dust
that is spilled into me as you
speak of the day before and how
the clocks still tick that same
hour.

CINDY VEACH

The paper suns revolve

The paper suns revolve. The school
children sing in even voices
about the journey of mary while
shadows echo inside the chambers
walls. Your hair brushes against
mine. My voice is soft. The city
looks foggy. The streets are small.
We withdraw.

TOM WEISMAN

untitled poem

i am not forcing you
to read this poem about
how i feel when i am
sitting in one room writing
and you are in another
room painting when you
say the smell is the same
and i say what you
say the smell is the same
and i wonder what you
are talking about
and you overwork
the place just like you knew
you would and
we must make
love but we have to remove
the light fixture and change
the bulb and you work in
your sketchbook and i
keep writing this poem
and you suddenly
run into my
dreams of last tuesday
on which i dreamt i
mounted a zebra and
traveled to zahm in search
of my leg that had unraveled
and wrapped itself around
last night if i would return
on the morning she sold

goat kidneys in the market
place where fishermen tell
stories of touching woodpecker
beaks to the breasts of their
wives who gather every evening
in barn basements and put on
headphones to listen for vibrations
of canvas in the next room
and how miniatures are
abstractions with a head
turning sideways because
a needle is in sight of
illuminating smoke and
fire by friction with
due credit given to
the writer whose verse
stuggles with a scalpel
painlessly slicing the
stomach of his daughter
who just ran by rubbing
a metal haning
soon to be explained
by a tied shoe and a
frown of four not saying
where a feeling dragged
you last night through
the rain.

ROSE MARIA WOODSON

tales of a grandfather

when elephants danced tusk to tusk, & glow
worms paid their bills on time, there used to be
a wind that blew, a blue wind that blew in
the open door & settled easy like
in the rocking chair and rocked about where
you're a-rockin' now--named Mystery he
once revealed, and when I asked him why he
rocked, he said it felt good to go nowhere.
a lighted blue wind, like a see-through sky right
about the timethat the moon's turnin' in...
at times he winked a few hints that maybe
one day before I got too big I'd go
&see the elephants myself, but I
guess I went to bed too early to fly.

My grandmother who was a mystical
lady told me to look on her deathbed
for the stone she'd placed in the kitchen sink
under the tap left dripping one by one
drops a hundred years to see which had won
& I remembered, tho I didn't think
too much of or on the things that she'd said
feeling sure of the fact that physical
decay short-circuits the brain, And it does
discolor the gray matter a bit but
never the mind & it was from her mind
that she spoke to me alone as I was
to discover in later years when what
did I see but a stone with no behind.

PAUL YOUNG

A Journal

It was a plague year.
Nashua County knew it.
The congregation of La Foourche
parish knew it.
the people eating and playing
cards in Molly's Come Right Inn
knew it.
Even the cells which were red
pieces of Robert Weaver stuck to
the front window of Molly's
somehow knew it.
The man who drove away with his
friends in the '58 Chrysler
laughing about how the "old bitch"
had damn near cut off his arm
when he cut loose on Robert Weaver,
knew.
Robert had guessed,
slack-jawed, dust lifting lightly
hair to hair to hair,
knees turned screwy like some
silly jackleg circus freak,
one shoe off and down the street,
the other no better, hung off his
toe like that,
arms slung out like he wanted
to love the concrete,
eyes gone someplace to the back
of his big, dandelion head,
looking at his brain, brain.

I think he was looking for
a '58 Chrysler.

I think he was looking for
a taste.

I think he was looking at Molly
or little bitty Ruth
huddled all squealy in the corner
with her bad teeth showing.

PAUL YOUNG

What I Will Not Do

Swing from the trees and beat my chest,
come to your house and play,
let you come to my house and play,
scream because you don't understand,
think about it,
let your plant snake seeds in my ears,
send spells hooting over cornfields to
bite out your tongue and,
make your eyes leak blood,
forget,
let you forget,
lodge malignant acorns in your bowels
to rend you with oak,
do unto you as you would have me do,
be forgiven,
be sorry,
love you till death,
make deadly love to you,
curl about your toes and lick them,
dance if my spears kill you,
turn your feet to dagger mouths
eating leisurely upward.

CHRISTINE ZAWADIWSKY

Ceasars Pool

they squiggle like tadpoles, like toothpaste
shooting from an electric tube, their limbs
hard obnoxious unmelting poetry in the six-to-
twelve pool. Diving into fear, into undefeated
waves, Marvin with his wall-eye is a Frankenstein
miniature, Rosa a budding future Lolita, and
Barbara the games mistress, beating their loins
with staffs from a willow tree ("Go ahead, jump in!").
Mark wallows in voluptuous milk-white trunks, pure as
the sap of dandelions; and with his bare hands he
strangles frogs and his enemies, riding the back
of the lifeguard in the water ballet. Birch tree
spines, spaghetti legs, the third-ger.

spines, spaghetti legs, the third-generation
mama smokes her cigarette and frowns at their unrequited
valor: they are the children of seamstresses, professional
window-washers, and the girls all want to paint apartment
houses like their father. Dunking fat as innertubes,
confused as green salads, all of them are beaming
much closer to life than any laser or me, as Diana dives
and floats on her back, her flesh a skeleton, nonchalantly
waterspouting whales of depth, an immutable death

CHRISTINE ZAWADIWSKY

*A Lack of Intercourse
for Gene*

kids are hopping like colored ping-pong balls
into the parade, trying to snatch shells that've fallen
from the throats of army guns; and in the badminton
clatter, the sweet red-white-and -blue croquet game,
in the beat of the music, the rough animal snarls,
I am in a white cell that I am painting once again
white with the wind, I am painting all the spiders in the world
to death. In our mansion where Tarzan was lashed and mashed just
for wanting to free Jane, in our spouting pouting surly lip
of an organic memorial, we are fishnets and confetti
and bombs falling red tender violent bursting busting
strapping strong in the lines, we are the abstraction
of a parade. You have a head made of seventeen thousand
infectious biological cells, each of which is searching
for a gas station where passive woman wait lined up
in hoses, intubes, in salted barrels, waiting and
teasing with their sloe eyes, with their fat: and
I am seven jagged diagonals, striped fishing poles, prairie
gophers, carnival tents: trying to explain incest
to you in the jungle where the mone can only be a
C or a D, where the best mark is F+ for being Diogenes
searching in the the nonexistent cellars of Greek slave ships
for the truth in the tallow of dripping candles, women
like lard, not like oaks, not like willows. The cracking
banging bashing pinata of the American small city of the ages
is our parade, your bony penis, my incompatable blue
gazelle, crown of dandelions, impatient wild orchids
infected wilderness uterus. Kids are searching for the shells
of ampty memories, peanuts, sea animals, but you and I echo
vaguely yet argumentatively in tattered battered splendid
banners of hostility, red red red red scarlet throat gashes,
leprosy and loss of voices white as the bellies of alewives,

dull pampered sophisticates, imprisoned, each a chambered nautilus,
never to touch each other's organs with out thirsty guns, never to chance
upon solid healthy pelvic contingent interlocking corridors

CHRISTINE ZAWADIWSKY

Changing Into My Sick Husband

I am a child plotting a secret revolution, hiding cheeky smiles and Guevera knives in the course of this planet, I am trying the package with inconspicuous crosses and bloody lives. Encased in a tiny cardboard grave, MONSTEROUS MISTAKES FOR MOTHERS TO MAKE is a game for the few over-privileged like you, those who have squeezed my head into nothing but electrical juice, wired me with sound and tricky extensions, produced a bomb with which I can blast the corners from all of the universities sunk in the chambers of your suicidal skull. When your anger has been boiled away, steamed into the vast pores of the universe, I shall still be inventing these games. A photograph taken in '64 shows my brother tangled in yarn and ribbons; his head and his hands were never free, he lost a finger in a table saw, and you lost nothing but invisible appendages. Affixed to the thick cord some doctors call golden or Oedipal, a telepathic telephone from you to her heart, while my father was always hypnotized with a vast array of categories and old here movies, THIS WAY TO INFINITY, PRODUCTION, SUCCESS, THE FINER POINTS OF MANIPULATION IN BUSINESS, and after twenty-four years of dodging the artillery, I am beginning to believe in living in piano boxes, loving the cardboard until it snows, rooting for jails and the deliverance of muffling what's here. Truth is falsity standing on it's own head, and from your position as the life-long ROVER, THE TRICK WONDER, you are changing into an amazing pedestal, I am developing a bark and straining at the groin. As fury is futile, as we stolidly face all daggers and alleyways, silver cops and purple wives, all the world still loves Jekyll; who can kill Mr. Hyde

