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The Wineskin

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Fall 1989

Wineskin, Fall 1989

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 Newberg, Oregon 97132

"If my poetry aims to achieve
 anything
 it's to deliver people
 from the limited ways in
 which they see
 and feel."

Jim Morrison
 1943-1971

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X

Thirst

For the fluid of yourself I thirst,
to dilute with sincerity the
still water of my oiled heart
lift the vessel of mine being and drink
Until well versed in the souls of eachother

Kirk Mylander

Reconciliation

My approaching noise
flew two kissing birds away
neither I share the secret
nor they conclude the joy,
Cuckoo stopped cooing
flew into the woods
rats, rodent kinds
ran underground
their search for food undone,
Hundreds labouring ants
I found my foot had trodden dead
the rest ran for their life--
leaving me deserted sadly alone
hungering for their trust.

Tsering Nima

06-26-90

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TC Book Store

we were walking together, talking
about so many things -- laughing at ourselves and
the world.

then you turned to me and smiled --
your eyes took hold of mine and
would not let me go --
something inside me stopped breathing
for that moment --
time and all eternity stood still in that smile,
your eyes lighting the way to places i
have never been --
and in that instant of time,
something in my soul was frozen, trapped
in the warm embrace of your smile.

and then you moved --
i moved with you and
was free.

Brenda Adams

A Prayer For Rain

Tonight I know that I am alone
There will be no arms to hold me tonight
No friendly voice in conversation
No laughter
Wan and pallid, the full moon is pasted on the frigid sky
Traces of dust lie strewn across the wide heavens
I breathe the cold like a drug
It is my solace
The shadows of tall stone walls reminds me of my
calling, wretched and tired
Continually I have followed this path
But ritual brings only grim and fleeting
satisfaction
I want out of this prison
And as I stare up at this cool, clear, crisp October
sky I pray for rain
Even now knowing that it will not come...

Mark Oppenlander

Sometimes

Life gets to the point
That it is easier not to think about it
Just pretend to live it.

Robbie Kay Naser

we were walking together, talking
about so many things -- laughing at ourselves and
the world.

then you turned to me and smiled --
your eyes took hold of mine and
would not let me go --
something inside me stopped breathing
for that moment --
time and all eternity stood still in that smile,
your eyes lighting the way to places i
have never been --
and in that instant of time,
something in my soul was frozen, trapped
in the warm embrace of your smile.

and then you moved --
i moved with you and
was free.

Brenda Adams

In My Backyard

She brought her baby home the other day.
Nine months gone by so quickly.
Groanings, changed life madness
suddenly theirs.

She smiles and waves,
but not to us.
We share a common backyard court
that is all.

She lays there in the sun
settles out to the side
and flattens
in sweat-fleshed splendor.

She seems so serene.
I remember
no sitting time

Does she feel that way?

She talks to him at the grill
while he stands, hand on hip
like every other barbecuer
on every other patio.

What do they talk about?
unmarked days-
one then the other-
rote rites of passage?

To think they were doing it-
Doing *it* all the time.
And then,
another stamped in His image
came to live in my backyard.

Laura Engle

reclined in summer's sand
caught in constant unconscious thought

there used to be something that mattered
though never knowing what

taken for the advantages
though hold on for love
that was only assumed

coming into a balance
no longer caught inbetween
no embroidered stories
to dress the truth
no jealousy or desire
to press the flesh
in new found pride

Raymond Gleason

The Ones Who Walk Away

Every now and then
for no apparent cause,
someone walks away
to Somewhere
few can follow

losers
winners
saints or
sinners

they were the ones
who walked
away
and never looked back

and I'll bet God on my soul
they made it

G. W.

i fear

you see in me
love
like worn lines
where the hems have been let
from old jeans

Kristin Carson

Cracker Jacks

Green stems
Poke my eyes
I cannot see
For the petals

Dead dirt
Stroke my face
I cannot breathe
Through the stench

Cold wood
Pin my head
I cannot move
For the nails

Rabid rodents
Tear my flesh
I cannot live

My beauty fails

Glenn Conley

how great it must be
to be the shore of the sea

having each wave
conceal every unfortunate encounter

to start fresh anew

again
and
again

Raymond Gleason

OVLE
RUTHT
YBUEAT
RUSTT
OGD
ELFI
EPCAE

Funny how man
tends to distort
all that is
ogdo.

Robbie Kay Naser

Imagine

Salem

1692

An open court overlooking the town.

Here stands the proclaimed messiah

Accused and convicted

for acts of public healing,

Debauchery

and corruption of the youth.

Sentenced to burn at the stake.

He is beaten and cast down

Forgotten, betrayed.

Shielding no curse or stab.

Without defiances or desire.

The secret safe

Kept in the heart of this accused witch

Forgive them Father

they know not why.

A draft of wind blows

at the rising flames.

Brian Hartenstein

Innocence is being able to ask all the

questions without the pain of the answers.

It is youth without a vision of age. It lives with

no heartache, and lonely eternities. It is

seen once and it never comes again.

Erica Mortenson

I changed my mind

Forget it
I don't want to live a hippie existence
I want to live a high-stress life
Run from deadline to deadline
Every moment packed tight
Frenzied

Then I won't have time to think
or contemplate

And I can happily die young of a heart-attack
Without ever having taken time to feel the pain
Or view the sorrows of the world
Or wonder where all the confusion will lead to
I could just live life before I realized that I had

Robbie Kay Naser

Goodbye, Lullaby

Peaceful infant slumber
Interrupted by pain after pain.
The screams, so silent on planet earth,
Grow ever louder in heaven's ear.

Centuries old horror
Gaining acceptance as we claim
That until that paramount moment, birth,
Sameness of fetus and child isn't clear.

Peaceful Christian slumber
Undisturbed by this hideous game.
We live in dreams, indulge in mirth,
And slaughter of innocents draws judgement near.

Pamela R. Friesen

Cracks

Today
When you or I
move on the sidewalk
or run or step or jump
and see the cracks
we know that
it's not us who
hurt
him
but someone had to
was it you or me
or everyone who has
stepped on him
years and days ago
and if fault is all
we are part of all
and partly fault
should partly
feel remorse
for we
you and I
have helped to
hurt
him.

We are sorry
but we stepped on grass
yesterday.

Brian Goff

The Iniquiter's Son

Taking in the pasture,
where all fifty head
ribs show through, textured
like a washboard.
A faded Royals cap hangs
in hand, and a
bald head scratched.
Devils in the Cud,
thinks the scalp.
Devils in the Herd.
The Matriarch dead
of Sunday's steak.
Why What and How?
A burning farm,
A fiery lake.

Kirk Mylander

The God Desire

There on the horizon stands Desire
Thick with silence and Sunday promise;
Brimming with gentle pyre.
His setting sun is now upon us,
Beckoning like a wet rose.
Oh who, in this wistful garden, has found a weed?
One that cannot help but grow
And ripen and turn to seed.
Desire whispers like glass beads.
Fringed with silk-soft laughter,
He sows His seeds
And I am His forever after.

Over the horizon flies Desire
And takes me with Him into the fire.

Kristin Carson

A Place to Bathe

See the way the sun shines there
warming a pool
Scatter some Lavender blossoms-
let's go in.

It's cool, but I'm melting.
I go to pieces like a child's
awkwardly built stack toy.
All my bright synthetic armor
born away.

Now I see the cathedral.
Primeval trees stand like palace guards.
I see brown bare feet on the rocks
and slippery children smiling in the
turquoise pools.

Near gods themselves,
drinking from the waters edge
and daily healed,
they must have known.

They yielded
and became willows.

The flowers have tangled in my hair.
I think I'll wear them home-
I just remembered my birthright.

Laura Engle

Kingdom Within

Where are you
the prospects that overwhelmed me
with restlessness and joy,
When in Mom's lap
by Winter's fire
'midst lullabies
of sings and songs
and nightly tales of
elves and fairies,
you chimed in my tender ear
with promises soft and sweet:

Growing full and free
doing things of glory
seeing world of wonder...

Made-up face
indifference in Mind
numbness in Soul
say that mean not
fear in word
shadow in eyes
belief that belie
nation to nation
man to man...

While thus lamenting
methought I heard a voice:

"Child," it said
"The kingdom is within you."

Tsering Nima

Listen children to a story that was written
since the garden we all fell out of
and became workers and bankers and doctors
and such.

When is there time enough?
What kind of insurance do you have?
What kind of will have you written?
Listen children
the good Lord aint gonna let you live
forever.

Pedalling downwards through light
and memory
I come to a choice
between an easy ride
through quiet dreaming cows
and the spiral up
into the hills
beckoning hills that, once climbed
have only other hills on the other side.
Canted forward
I lean into the choice
and pedal up
toward my idea of hills
toward a horizon that remains
infinitely far away.

Dixie Conley

I remember Londontown, Idaho as a lackadaisical village located in the heart of palouse country. Dust dry and ever in need of a good rainfall, it nestled morosely on the edge of a valley, snaking its way between parched hills of farmland. I can recall the giant hill on the back side of the town. Its slopes rose menacingly above the valley, casting daily an intriguing aura over the land.

The town seemed to be virtually devoid of tourists, even though it sported an alluring western flavor. Most people travelling north and south on the highway never passed through the town, but the brave souls that ventured out of their way to sightsee there tended not to pasture long. I can only guess that the ominous nature of that crazy hill spoiled any pleasure tourists found in Londontown. Had I not had a reason to travel from miles away to see a relative, I would have never come there on my own. Although I graciously visited with my aunt, I spent several days coping with a slight depression. Without having the hill as a backdrop, the atmosphere of the town would have been much lighter. I believe it takes faith to move mountains, but in my opinion only the small cemetery, peaking on the lower knob of the hill, needed to be resituated to change the town's livelihood. Unfortunately, the longer I stayed in Londontown, the more fear the cemetery instilled within my heart.

I came to the area to visit my aunt Melba, a sweet lady from my mother's side of the family. Arriving by jet in the metropolis of Spokane, Washington, I took an overcrowded bus to Londontown. Luckily, Auntie waited for my arrival with open arms, whisking me away from that darkhorse bus station and giving me a small tour of the town. On the drive home, we passed several churches, a general store/post office/court house, a smithy, and a number of aged bars. The town seemed quaint and cheery at first regard, but the cemetery, rising spirit-like above the valley, stole away any second glance.

Two days after my arrival, I lounged with my aunt on her terraced front porch, chatting and reminiscing about politics and family memories. In the midst of conversation, I noticed Auntie glancing frequently toward the hill. Occasionally, when she regarded the general direction of the cemetery, a strange, almost comical expression darted across her face. She seemed to be daring me to inquire her about her thoughts. I chose to remain silent, that is, until she asked me, "What's the matter, Tom? You seemed somewhat reserved today."

"Well, you keep looking at that old graveyard on the hill like something's happening up there. I'm wondering what's going on."

"Oh, I just like to look at it. Don't take it to heart, dear," she replied reassuringly, looking at me with a keen eye.

I replied boldly, "Personally, I think it's pretty ugly. It sure doesn't do the town justice."

"What do you think we should do about it then, Tom? Dig it up and move it somewhere else?" Auntie said, a soft note of rebuke entering her voice.

"Now that's an idea."

"Tom, Tom, Tom," she tisked, shaking her head and folding her arms. "You can't just dig up hallowed ground to satisfy a bunch of tourists and get away with it. Why should our town risk losing its water source for the sake of city folk?"

"Huh? You lost me with that stuff, Auntie. What do you mean by that?"

"Well, it's a long story. Do you have time? Of course you do, what else is there for a teenager to do around here? It's either this or work, but I know you wouldn't want to do that. I guess I might as well tell you the story now. Maybe someday you can write it down and make lots of money from it, and then you can take care of your aunt in her old age."

I laughed at her irony.

"The Ballick Cemetery is the final resting place for most of Londontown's prominent leaders. The first one buried there was an Englishman named Edgar Ballick. He was a famous eye surgeon who also dabbled in lunar power. He founded and named this place after his hometown, London, which is where most of his family still lives. Anyway, Dr. Ballick built most of the important buildings in town, like that big, rustic house down there yonder, in the center of town. That's the public museum now, but it was Edgar's home when he was alive.

"Londontown was his labor of love to society, so to speak. He wanted it to be a reminder to everyone of all the great things he'd contributed to people, because he was a very pious and generous kind of guy. He always used to say that the community was his body and soul and that it would always be a part of him. He even said once that he was going to 'feed this town with all his heart and forever quench its thirst with his tears.'"

"That's pretty eloquent, Auntie. Where'd you learn all that from? You haven't lived here that long, have you?" I asked her after she'd finished her speech.

"I studied up on it at the museum, 'cos when I moved here I was just as curious about the cemetery as you. Curiosity must be hereditary, huh?"

"You still haven't told me what the cemetery has to do with you water supply, though. Have you?"

"I was getting to that, Tom. Let me think now, I've lost my train of thought. Oh yes, I was talking about Edgar's 'tears.' You may not like the cemetery and Joe Tourist may not appreciate it either, but it probably won't ever move. Dr. Ballick and his immediate family, as well as a lot of other influential people, who I won't mention, are buried up there. Londontown would never agree to move its ancestors anywhere else, especially since it's built on unwanted land. No developer would want to construct a shopping mall on a hill. None of the farmers around here would ever agree to bury the dead on their valuable farmland, either. Besides, country folk have too much respect for the deceased to disturb them.

"Being an out-of-towner, you probably wouldn't understand the connection between the Ballick tomb and our water supply, but maybe you will, so I'll tell you. Edgar's tomb is a tall marble slab topped by a huge marble ball. Obviously, the ball stands for the name 'Ballick.' Here's the interesting part of the story -- when moonlight hits the tomb, illuminating it, the ball looks just like an eye. It's the weirdest feeling when you go to his tomb, and it watches you wherever you go. You can't escape it.

"Stranger still is the fact that when night falls and moonlight hits the tomb, water starts flowing into Potlatch Creek. And that's where Londontown gets its water. It's as if Edgar really quenches the town's thirst with his tears. That is, when the moon shines."

"Auntie, that sounds pretty far-fetched. I'm not sure whether to believe you either way."

"Why do you doubt me, Thomas? If you want proof, go and search it out for yourself. There's going to be a full moon tonight, so go ahead and see."

For those who are familiar with people like me, it's a given that I went out to the cemetery that night. However, I foolishly lighted out on foot, travelling at least five miles before beginning an uphill climb to the Cemetery Knob. I hiked another two miles, nearly reaching the hill's summit, before I actually caught sight of an open field dotted with dozens of tombstones. I beheld a number of grave markers standing in solemn rows, the newer and

smaller ones designating the temporary boundaries of the graveyard. I also saw Ballick's tomb, by far the largest one in the cemetery. It stood stately in the center of the field and threw shadows on the stones surrounding it.

Auntie's description of the tomb turned out to be fairly accurate. Made of burgundy marble imported from Florence, it consisted of a squarish base and a stem that tapered into a large, rounded head. I also noticed that when moonlight fell on the tomb, the light reflecting from it subconsciously created the image of an eye, following my every movement. The experience slightly unnerved me. The tombstone, however, gave no explanation for its connection with Londontown's water. My curiosity became almost unbearable.

The following morning I begged Auntie to finish her tale over eggs, English muffins, and coffee. She smiled at me and asked, "You went up there last night, didn't you, Tom?"

My voice escaped me momentarily.

"That's all right. I never told you you couldn't check it out for yourself. You didn't find much up there, did you?"

"Not really."

"You see, Tom, it's like this. Edgar's hobby was making lunar devices, and he built a pumphouse activated by the light of the moon. It happens to be located under his tomb, so moving the cemetery would destroy the pumphouse. That's where the legend comes from, anyway. Most of the people around here, including me, get their water from the Troy hookup. That's not a reason for us not to move it, anyway. But the water tale's a good one to tell outsiders," Auntie concluded, smirking. "Want me to teach you how to hunt snipes now?"

M.G. Edwards

