

The Eleventh

**DIME BAG**

Glendon College  
Toronto  
March 1974

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With this issue **Dime Bag** makes a significant step in its gradual but progressive improvement in physical representation. Four years ago, it consisted of a dozen mimeographed sheets stapled together. This eleventh **Dime Bag**, in addition to being folded, trimmed, and stitched, is also typeset in the manner as any other printed book. At last, the physical nature of the nature of the magazine is approaching the quality of literature submitted to it.

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Barbee Laskin

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Marilyn Collins  
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Publications Office, York University

## Wing Span

1

After a time  
the drone fades.

Left,

suspended,

gazing down

wards past the struts,

we watch the dark

green islands on black

lakes pass

in slow revue.

The islands, green tabbies

with furs of pine forest

curled in sleep (smooth &

softlooking like Lawren

Harris knew them).

The lakes: the small oval ponds

hidden by bordering trees til

we're right above, surprised,

seeing a moose splash in

to the bush, a man gaze

up open-mouthed,

his arms the smell of smoke & skins,

his birch lodge behind,

his stout woman watching

his tawny back,

All this in a flash

over the oval pond.

The lakes: the large lakes

spreading into sunblur

with vast islands like

wooded kingdoms, the great

black expanses of water

passing into unsight,

wide white

paths of sun

along them

ever widening.

2

Her  
brother  
and  
I  
played  
catch  
caught  
frogs  
Her  
tanned  
arms  
smell  
of  
spice

The fragrance of cabins.  
Wood painted green in summer.  
The warm aromas of porridge &  
brown sugar & clean laundry on-the-line &  
new cake, vanilla morning.

Afternoons in August, outer edges of trees turning  
orange, the ruined red tennis court, the little boat  
on the bay by the lodge, the lookout.  
Talking on the pine-needed floor among loose trees.  
On the carpet of the forest, talking  
or not talking.

In evening the screened porches yield  
murmured conversation, the creak of rockers,  
& wood smoke smell.

Dave Carpenter

## Proposal

Warm juicing jazz loosed in us in slow smoke rotation  
iced dubonnet & sweating syrupy beer a spirit of warmth  
& juice-coursing youth tumbling us tipsy from Oscar's  
musical magic thru colonial gates & into midst & rush  
of mid-fuckhunt & joyseek & heat-frustration but weez cool  
in organy lilt & dive & thrive on rings in windows which  
you teasingly choose & cruise on my discomfiture like  
Jesu's chick on His waves or vibes for her but oh  
the great loving (well-planned) joke's on you when later we  
surrepticiously (& giggling too) climb illicitly into bed  
& I produce from underneath the swishing sheets a tiny  
box & you give me one real deep eye stare thensuddenly  
fire inside & find (gleaming smugly) the golden  
rings you so admired.  
and now weer living marriedly  
but certainly not as harriedly  
and it is cool & meet to note  
that jazz & beer & dubonnet  
still make us float  
and feel the way  
we did that grand acceptance day.

Dave Carpenter



## Matapedia River

The old cabin  
with its unpainted porch  
warping down to the river.

The fast shallow  
wide water rushing  
over gold & ivory pebbles.

Warner wades  
into the current.  
Gordie skips stones.

Harry watches,  
nursing his beer.  
It is a quiet time.

In the outhouse  
I watch the river pass  
by the doorway like a film.

There had been stag movies  
and much beer at Rimouski  
in the Hotel du Boulevard.

And, at the auberge,  
tides and guitar, and the rocks  
rising from the muck like death heads.

(Once, at Kelowna,  
I swam with logs  
in shallow Okanagan.)

In the outhouse  
I watch the river pass  
by the doorway like a film.

Dave Carpenter

**Too embarrassed**

I once loved a girl  
who loved to dance,  
but she never danced  
all night for me.

Now she's gone and  
I don't dare think  
about my dreams.

**Michael McCabe**



On returning home  
I found  
My mother in the garden  
Feeding her birds  
and flowers  
And loving on her own  
And I stood  
watching  
Through the window  
with the flowered sill  
Until she noticed me  
and slowly turned to  
the house  
smiling.

Celia Donnelly

Songs of Innocence

1789

The Author & Printer    W Blake

Introduction

Piping down the valleys wild  
Piping songs of pleasant glee  
On a cloud I saw a child.  
And he laughing said to me.

Pipe a song about a Lamb;  
So I piped with merry cheer,  
Piper pipe that song again—  
So I piped, he wept to hear.

Drop thy pipe thy happy pipe  
Sing thy songs of happy cheer,  
So I sung the same again  
While he wept with joy to hear

Piper sit thee down and write  
In a book that all may read—  
So he vanish'd from my sight.  
And I pluck'd a hollow reed.

And I made a rural pen,  
And I stain'd the water clear,  
And I wrote my happy songs  
Every child may joy to hear

## Introduction to Songs of Innocence

### Hamelin

This news vendors a man two-  
minded calling: moon-landing!  
Man lands on the moon (recalling  
after last nights news

with its men lead shoed following  
lamb-like over and through bland dunes  
how he fell asleep with the runes  
high and static of spaces hollowing

tubes in his ear and how he dreamt  
astronaut dreams: soft white strangers  
leaping stiles toward an endangered  
angel propped against newsprint

clouds insomniac singer removed  
They vanished in recomposing  
symphonic testpatterns rose  
to horns and clanking change shoved

from pocket to pocket to the sleep of truth  
in the happy pen of facts the legible choices  
of columns headlines that reedvoiced  
vendor hamelined so innocently mouthed

Ruth Cawker

## Doctor

I am the Doctor

hand me the stethoscope  
let it swing between  
my white coat

Open your chest

I will lay my stethoscope  
with its steel  
coldness  
upon the bareness  
of your beat

I feel your beat

pulsating within my chest  
But I must play the doctor  
I must stifle our unified  
rhythm  
with my cold  
analysis

Marilyn Collins

## APPLES

Red and Ripe,  
Hard and Polished,  
Apples—

The symbol of sin  
the temptation  
of  
Eve and Adam,  
Who bit hard  
upon the serpent's  
request  
into the pulpy flesh.

Now—

(in the age of sin)  
The apple:  
no longer  
crunched and munched  
is  
mushed and squashed  
into the  
sloose and slaush  
of  
apple sauce

Marilyn Collins

wow man, it's alright

Well man, what's the plan?  
Like, what is a happening?  
Where is the happening?  
Do we have to make it?

Take it easy man, sit down,  
Settle into the radio vibes  
And dig the ree-lax-ation,  
No sweat man, its groovy.

Far out man, weird book,  
I think I dig parts of it,  
Reminded me of something,  
Maybe I'll read another.

Out of sight, like I mean,  
Was it ever cool,  
Like all that action,  
Wow, was it ever neat!

Well, what do you want, man?  
Just gonna sit there,  
Or go out and goof around,  
Or take a hot bath?

No man, I wanna buy a car,  
Put a T.V. in the trunk,  
Park it in a garage  
And turn on the radio.  
I'LL have me a dog to fetch the morning news.  
I'll live in a brick house surrounded by frost fences.  
I'll have hedges on both sides of the driveway.  
I'll use ever-ready batteries and goodyear tires.  
I'll drink Heidelberg on Sundays,  
C.C. on Mondays,  
And water in my Scotch the rest of the week.  
Well, what can you do?

Mike Wilson

## Pleasure in a can

Can't afford it  
but  
"What d'you want  
when you gotta have something . . . ."  
For a few coins  
I get  
a can,  
filled with  
cool, sparkling,  
bubbling liquid.  
It goes

down  
slowly, sweetly,  
serenely  
not really quenching  
thirst  
but a treat  
for the tongue  
that playfully swishes  
the effervescence around,  
the bubbles hiding and seeking  
between my teeth,  
tagging,  
tingling  
the insides of my cheeks  
and fizzing my throat.  
The can tilts . . .  
Lips strain to suck  
and receive  
the last drops  
of the canned nectar.  
Gone! — realization with a loud burp.  
Just goes to show  
Nothing good  
Lasts forever.

Paul

## Falsehoods

There is in every memory a lie.  
Time is a mystic metamorphosis  
Which causes all remembered truths to die.

A hammock sways as recollection sighs  
And sees the phantoms of her synthesis,  
For memory delights in telling lies.

The dreaming girl who in the hammock lies  
Invents her ghost; the ghost's exquisite kiss,  
Like all remembered truths, must quickly die.

A hand born in her mind now strokes her thigh,  
Now glides along her back now holds her breast,  
As memory invents delightful lies.

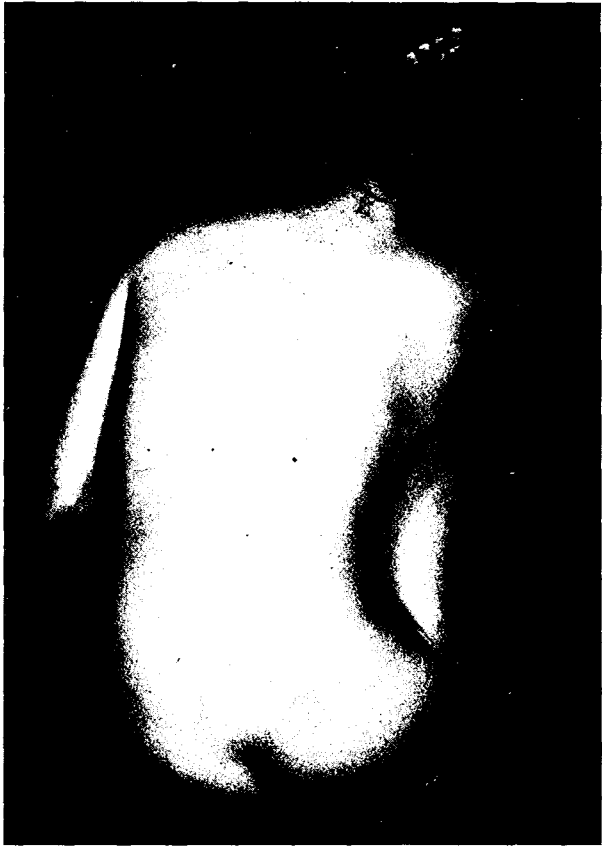
In every dream a different lover she tries.  
Her lost lover, whom she so seems to miss,  
Becomes in each new memory a lie,  
And causes all remembered truths to die.

Eva Lamden



Outside, the winds caress the trees into  
motion; moths bounce softly at the window,  
seeking out some bright flame to travel through.  
Midnight. I am eclipsed by your shadow—  
no other voices fall upon my ear;  
no face exists more haunting than your face.  
These thoughts that buzz like flies are all I hear  
amid the silences of boundless space.  
Becalmed, your ghost rides the swells of my mind;  
the eerie phosphorescence of your form  
transfigures golden lengths of chain which bind  
us in our past, face to face, form to form.  
The force which drives the moth towards the light  
guides you into the circle of my sight.

P.G. Shaw



Like lovers captured in an ageless song  
a winsome lady used to smile for me.  
(The wind sighed like a phantom all night long,  
among the trees it brushed so breathlessly.)  
Her eyes held all I yearned to find, but more  
than longing ended all my wanderings,  
the moment that I wandered through her door  
to learn the supple lessons passion brings.  
So long ago, it seems, that simple time—  
so hard, the intervening days and years  
which stand like mountains one must learn to climb  
to understand the love behind the fears.  
Like flowers on the table at a fast,  
this fragile woman decorates my past.

P.G. Shaw

## Correspondence

I peruse this old pile of letters,  
following their slow windings through the years—  
so the wandering past breaks the fetters  
time has wound around friends, or love, or fears.  
On paper, life seems more like a novel—  
characters come and go, events appear  
or vanish. But life, unlike a novel,  
requires death to make things disappear.  
Now I am left these correspondences  
with other lives and times, with other minds  
whose words were gropings at the entrances  
of all untrodden paths which life unwinds,  
and all the words which bound that kindred band  
lie sleeping on the pages in my hand.

P.G. Shaw

Freedom, once we said, above all we crave,  
ephemeral as summer butterflies  
perched midway between the earth and sky, slave  
to no man's will, untouched by pain or lies.  
We sought it as explorers ply the seas,  
to test the edge of space, or even time;  
we sought it in the metamorphoses  
we found in love, and wrought in splendid rhyme.  
But what we sought, we never thought to find  
before deep winters stilled our youthful wings,  
and bore us into light and out of mind,  
beyond the thousand cares such freedom brings.  
Yet I became the fragile butterfly—  
a flash of gold reflected in your eye.

P.G. Shaw

Vol à tire d'ailes  
à tire d'âme  
à tire d'espoir

Que l'on tire à bout de rêve  
en partance d'ombres et de lumières

Vol à tire de mots  
que l'on chasse avec le tir impromptu  
de la parole  
en bandoulière

**Lyse Guay**

Ici et là  
sur le rivage déserté  
de la mer en allée  
les étoiles meurtries  
tendrement s'étiolent  
et leur souffle psalmodié  
murmure la souffrance  
d'une terre silencieuse

Ici et là

le vent passe et se meut  
allègrement sans une pose  
vers les débris obscurs  
qui sillonnent les grèves

Ici et là

dans ma vie et la vôtre  
les écumes se pressent  
vers la houle impatiente  
et l'angoisse  
se colle aux lèvres de l'espoir

Lyse Guay





Une mélancolique et douceuse quiétude  
berce l'aurore fiévreuse  
Les vents alizés promènent leur ennui  
par-delà les cimes ombragées

Le soleil a baigné dans une ultime caresse  
l'horizon du monde  
Le ciel repose dans un linceul de clarté  
. . . et de sang

Tout se confond maintenant  
à ces marécages brumeux  
qu'ont transformé haine et désespoir

Le silence pèse lourdement sur la ville nue  
il étouffe et aliène l'homme chiffre . . .  
l'homme chiffe  
Désespéré il se débat dans sa cangue de chair  
et lutte contre les murs de sa prison mordorée

(Lucidité)

Lyse Guay

when  
everyone expects  
you to do beautifully  
dutifully  
they await your assurance  
not expecting that perchance  
you've loosened your stance  
up there  
where  
the air is so thin  
where  
you've got to breathe  
in and out slowly

if  
you're not clever  
if  
you don't do your duty  
beautifully  
you'll slowly sink  
down to where the lowlies are

sinking slowly  
into the lowlies  
who  
will never respect  
the clever ever  
again.

**Andrea Narvey**

Ranks of Sorrow

Big city doors closed behind you  
Locked you out of quiet joys  
No returning to the Legion House  
For a draft and memories  
Where a self-sung hero  
Could relive his prime  
Spent saving the world  
only to walk its streets  
in rags and  
wear his forgotten courage  
once a year.  
Saviours soon become  
tired old men  
and no one dances any more

David

And she dreams  
Silently in the sand  
And gets  
Sunburnt.  
And I cream  
Noxzema over her skin  
That's too sensitive  
To touch.

And I read  
Stories of the soul  
And get  
Sentimental.  
And she pleads  
For a conversation  
That's too sensitive  
To reach.

And she listens  
To the stereo's subtleties:  
The sounds  
Slowly shifting between speakers.  
And I take-in  
The soft, drifting smoke  
And get assaulted by the  
Lyrics.

And I start  
Singing with the song  
And sensing  
Something in silence.  
And she senses  
Her sunburnt shoulders  
And puts on the headphones  
Like always.

**M. Foley**

If I can tell you  
where I would like  
to be most of all  
you should be able  
to tell me where  
it all is waiting

John Lemaire

## La pitance

Je suis né pour un p'tit pain,  
Comme la majorité des humains,  
Mon père et mes amis,  
Ma nation et mon pays.  
Nous sommes tous nés pour un p'tit pain  
Auquel on nous a tous si bien conditionnés.  
Pain, pas plus grand que la grandeur d'une hostie,  
Pas plus cher que le coût d'un taudis.  
On a toujours accepté ce p'tit pain  
Qu'on nous donne sourire en coin.  
Qui, on l'a toujours accepté  
Et avalé les dents serrées,  
Mais maudit,  
Qu'aujourd'hui . . . on a faim.

Yves Gauthier

Tout seul, un somnambule un jour,  
sur la terre de fleurs,  
courait vers les épines pour  
y chercher l'éveil.

Il ne laissa que des sentiers  
de tiges et de corolles abattues.

Tombant de tout son long  
son corps moit et lourd  
écrasa les lilas  
Et voulant se lever d'une main,  
pressa le sang d'une paquerette  
et de ses doigts déchiqueta une rose

Michel Liddle

## The Ice Man

the ice man comes to this place  
and sits naked in the snow.  
he comes here to die.  
he will freeze and his body crack  
and clear like ice will glisten  
in the winter suns.

smiling blue lips and opaque eyes  
he is the ice man.

Andrew Nikiforuk



**Christmas '73**

Trees naked in the wind's north  
Sway, slowly waving onward  
Over the bleak land the passing shadows:  
Ageless choirs lament our ancient curse.

**Allen Perun**

I find it hard to believe  
that a little child of Japan  
has different dreams  
stirred by no Oedipal urges  
in the dead of night  
never dreams of tearing the wheel  
from Father's dying hands  
keeping the car on the road  
possible flooring it  
faster than Father ever dreamed  
I find it hard to believe  
that we conform  
to the place where we were born  
both day and night

**Elizabeth Hemsworth**

Here they come  
brightly at the door  
I try to focus on their faces  
my eyes slide off  
everywhere  
into corners  
the room behind beside them draws me  
I fear their mood will shift  
abandon them naked  
right now it is impossible to look

Elizabeth Hemsworth



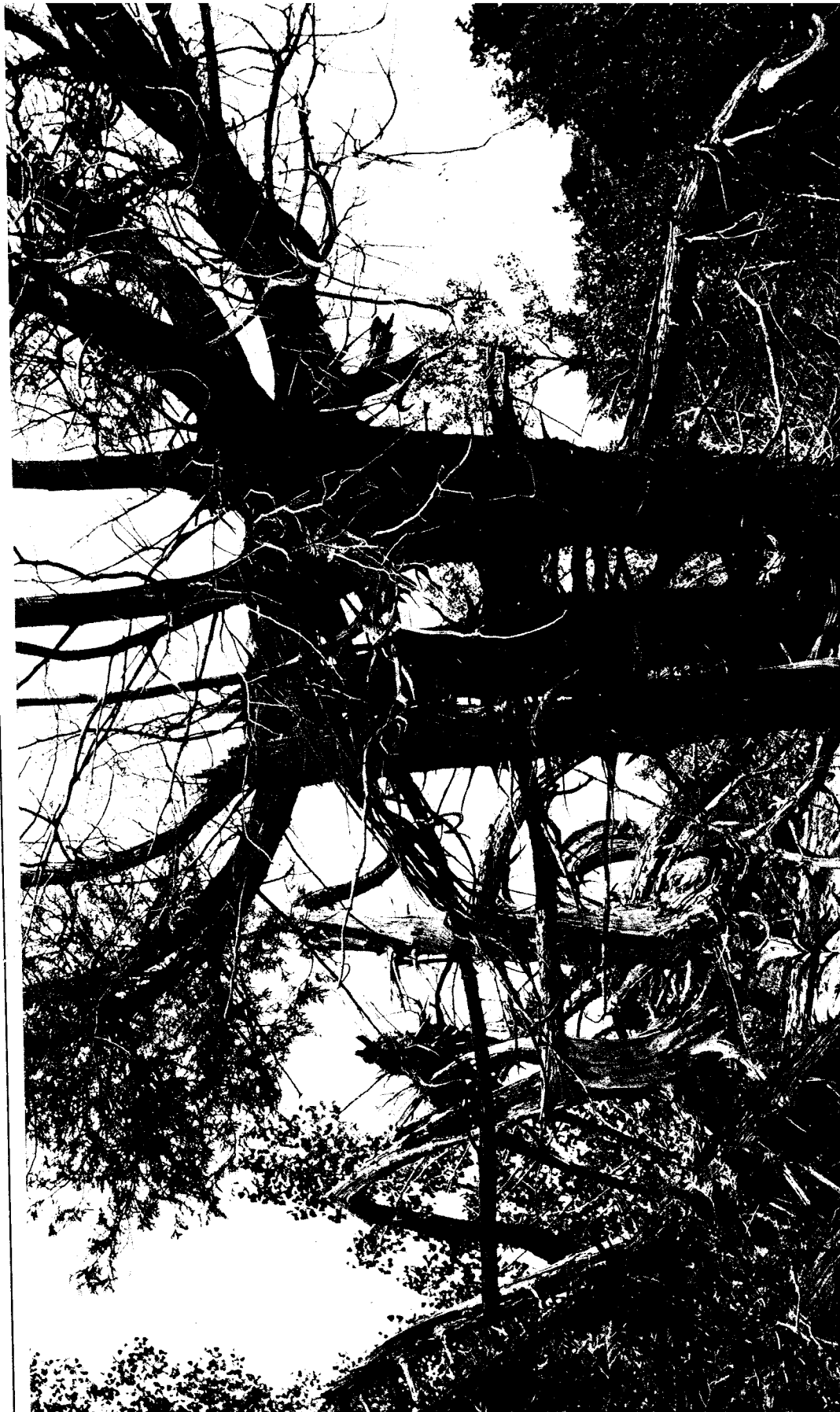
In the middle of the library  
I see a white gazebo  
with a green roof  
behind are cedar trees  
and a glimpse of deep sky  
this promise projected on the glass partition  
with the verisimilitude of reality  
turns me inside out  
over the work that is not done  
through the windows that are not barred  
to the real gazebo  
sparkling in the sun

Elizabeth Hemsworth

Remember Isaac  
although your father lost no concubines because of you  
still he wanted to destroy you  
pure and simple  
rip you out of your sweet confusion  
you profaned his bride  
stole her love  
lay interminably inside her  
union of her ecstasy  
subject of her love  
more    your sensuous birth brought him  
face-to-face with his own live reality  
like a painful death  
he knew instantly the sum of you  
was greater than the part he played  
knowing    milked his thirst dry  
good    you took on his guilt  
innocently wondering why  
a sacrifice was necessary

**Elizabeth Hemsworth**







**Sylvia Plath**

You forced my mind up out of the  
morass where it had sloshed about  
doing nothing but eat sick omens

you tore my eyes away from the  
dead living so I could see through  
the dark wall clearly

you stung my heart so that my blood  
no longer ran oozing through an  
unchartered course towards the grave

you turned me away from myself  
towards another self where search and  
seek are new blooms in an old garden

to be loved and loved and understood

**Eric R. Moore**

an evening with paul

aryan thoughts run through his hair  
while hesitant hands  
grope the woods for meanings  
inside smiles form a hazy connection

we are close along the street  
no special walkers amongst all the others  
but the night is white  
thrusting inhibitions  
into deserved isolation

we enter a dark place  
and into fingerprinted glasses order california wine  
my eyes line his hands  
as Silence weeps nearby

city faces squeeze into booths beside us  
and under gruelling lights  
their sickly features  
look like hockey pucks

eye upon eye  
we rape each other  
slowly dying of wordlessness  
music cleanses the stodgy glass  
until emptiness settles its bottom

he pays the check  
leaves no tip  
and again,  
we are on the street  
where blatant windows  
wind their way into our limbs

the buses have stopped running  
though people still need them

paul hails a cab & ever so swiftly  
i'm flying homeward with the whimsical memory  
of a hurried kiss  
and a promise to call

barbee laskin

you said you would call  
or look me up.  
but that was one year ago.

don't you think there's a  
limit to diplomacy? maybe  
you feel a guy should wait a  
while before seeing a new face?

but any more time, and i'll be  
out of recognition.  
i mean. . . we all change thru years.

you said you would call.  
you promised.  
twice.

why did you promise?  
(. . .you gave me hope)

maybe i'll call you. . .  
or maybe i, too, will be diplomatic  
and wait a year. or two.

of course, you want to see me.

you wrote me a letter.  
you spent time on syllables.  
you punctuated your thoughts.

barbee laskin

a tune vomits in my mouth:  
over-churning  
lava burning  
cutting into my fingernails

here i rest  
languid and darkened  
a constant stabbing  
overturning of blood  
veins jarring together  
    in rhythmic fanaticism

as i ask  
why you left me   waiting

our talk was interrupted  
as important talk  
always is  
. . .but then you said  
what about Saturday?  
and i agreed

the final face  
of evening  
looks on—  
disdainfully becoming morning

a pale blue  
climbs inside my brain  
casually  
carrying day  
and a new pain  
    palpitating

the day must be lived out

wind swallows my coat,  
my pants, my hair  
a barely-lit sun  
squeaks through my nostrils  
as i decide  
in the shadowy socket  
of a one-way lane  
not to see you again

barbee laskin

he chain smokes  
as earnestly  
as an old-movie buff  
haunts  
the catalogues.

in between  
the puffs  
he stuffs the silence  
with Fast talk.

he looks wisely at his pupils,  
and grazes their ideas  
with Long interpretations  
of his own.

Always  
he answers  
with a better question.  
often,  
he leans languidly  
on one hand and  
ever so caustically,  
agrees.

he wears a well trimmed beard  
of blues and blacks,  
enclothing his chiselled face  
like a suit of armour.

i notice his hands are large  
and negative.

the pants he chooses are always tarnished  
corduroy; with a greyish hue  
forming intricate dust patterns on one lone knee.

his tie is short  
and ugly.

when he looks at me  
i feel dumb and motionless  
the words plung through my gut  
like falling rocks while

his strong blue eyes make them Hard  
and Brutal inside;  
and every thursday, i know,  
there's no place to hide.

still—  
i wonder if his wife  
is really  
an artist.

barbee laskin

## Forest Fire, July 1911

Cordury road.  
Knots and branches scrape our feet,  
Grind and scrape.  
Tumble, wet on my knees and back  
Cold and wet.  
Brittle rock, hands on edge of crack  
Crack – or precipice.  
Pain. Where? On my thighs.  
Where? On my back.  
Why am I naked?

I was digging in the unsurveyed  
North of Whitney.  
I tasted wood between my teeth  
Branches cold, cold pine in my nose  
Its cool perfume in my throat,  
Smoke filled my nostrils  
Dryness, and I coughed;  
Wind waves of heat and I shivered.  
Don't look up. Just keep on working  
Men lose their claims  
When they stop to look up  
Don't look up . . . .  
Where's the sky?  
Smoke a black door slammed  
Against the sky  
A gate to the lake of fire.  
Where's the fire?  
(A small boy  
Chases a howling engine  
And the faces ask him  
As he passes):  
Where's the fire?

Keep working.  
Where's the fire?  
On my back!  
A howl of shock from the hole in my mouth  
Blood and fire licking my back  
Searing my thighs as I run, as I run  
The bush is a-blazing, where is the lake?  
The bush is a-blazing, where is the lake?

Water on my cheek.  
It isn't hot, it isn't cold.  
Ghastly trees stand on the burnt-out shore  
As if for a better look.  
I close my eyes.

Cordury road.  
Cinders beneath my running heel.  
Pain a blanket over me.

Andrew Donaldson



Typography

Text: IBM 11 Theme Medium

Titles: IBM 11 Theme Bold

Paper

Cover: Mayfair Cover Antique (Olive) 130M

Inside: Plainfield Offset (India) 160M

Printed in Canada  
by York University

# 12 Nov 1974

# DIME BAG

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FROST



*J. M. F.*

**DIME BAG**

Number Twelve, November 1974  
Glendon College, Toronto

No 8

The most obscene picture I can conjure up  
Is a dying river  
Encrusted with raw sewage and factory filth  
Or slag heaps from mine excavations  
Which leave the surface pockmarked  
Like blistered sausages

Eric R. Moore

No 11

Extract

The you in you is undecaying  
Uncopied unlabelled  
It is all things from time  
Which touch you uniquely  
From the beginning  
From gas and fire  
When air  
And earth  
And water  
And sun  
Commingled with the essence  
Delicately and laboriously  
Like a seed  
Dropped by the wind  
In the wake of a passing ship  
Carried on restless waves  
To some distant place  
Nurtured by the enthralling sun  
In the promiscuous earth  
Fed by summer rain and  
Sheltered by winter's snow  
Itself a oneness with nature

Eric R. Moore



**(The Water)**

It was an unexplainable force which  
urged me to fling myself into the icy water.  
Funneling downward, the sudden shock piercing my body.  
Then, deeper, deeper, the water rushing and swirling with the pressure on it,  
Curved me upward.  
My head surfaced and the bitter gust of  
Wind chilled my brain.

**Sheila Jones**

## For Sunshine

The wheels turned, the dry leaves on the path crackling as they met with the tires. Snick – snick – snick – snick. Another place where the wind had blown the fallen leaves onto the path.

Cold. Crisp. The autumn day brilliant. Mist still present.

The feeling of blood pumping, muscles stretching, working in harmony, was exhilarating. No one was in the park, a single person.

A gray squirrel darted across the path, its cheeks filled with nuts.

The miles unfolded, the sun warmed things imperceptibly, it warmed the mind. Snick – snick – snick – snick. More leaves. The trees were brilliant, multi-coloured, almost unreal.

Ahead there was a movement. Suddenly, another single rider. They approached one another, the separating distance diminishing rapidly. A flicker of irritation as he realized he was not solitary. They drew near, a slight smile, a nod of the head and again, they were alone. An empathy, an understanding of feeling without a word spoken. The irritation was gone, he knew no world was his to possess. He felt good that the feeling was shared.

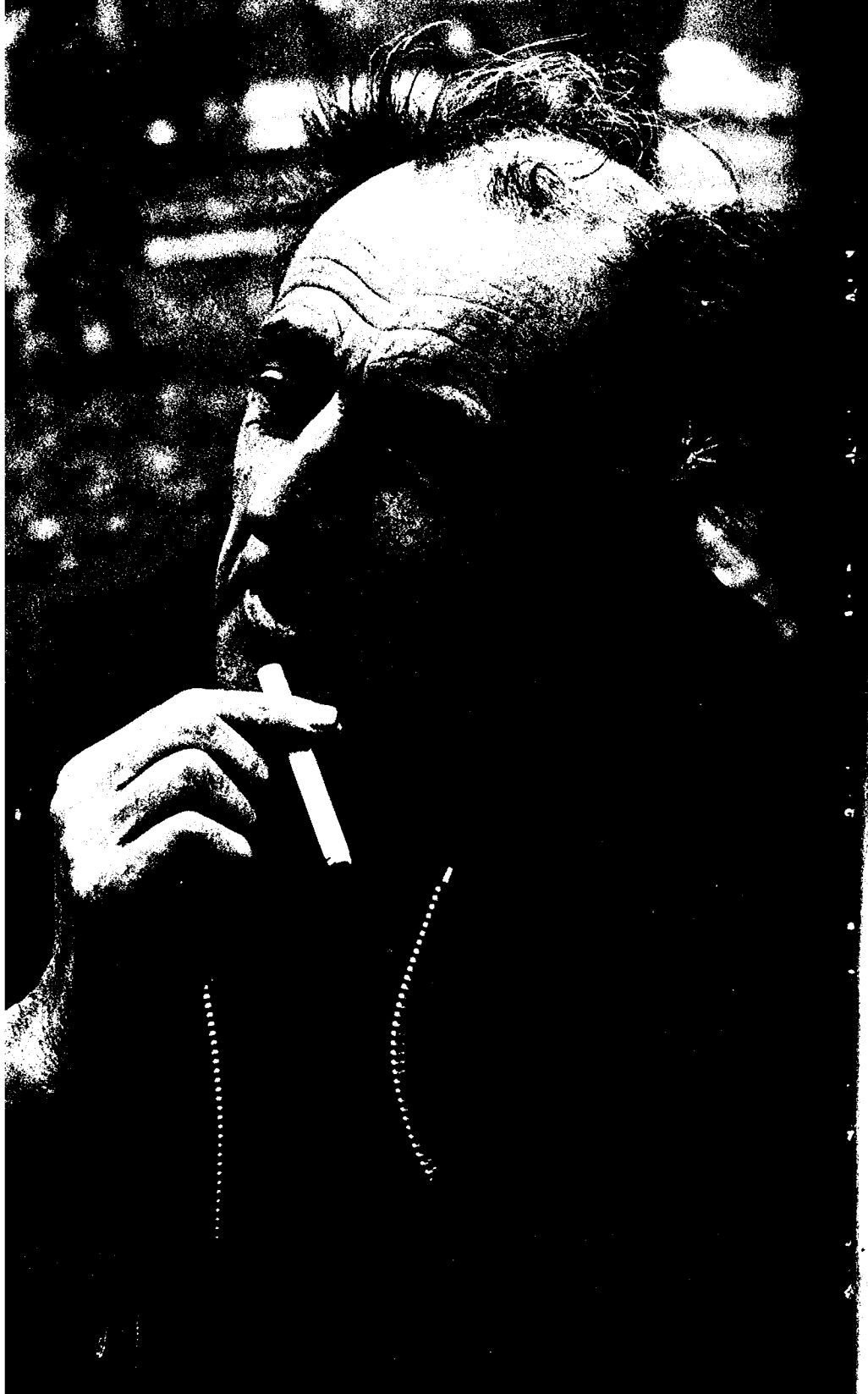
Stephen Barrick





## Pour vous, mes amis

La voix d'un mystère vous fait signe, silencieuse, apaisante,  
A vous mes amis, dont les bras enlacent la route  
L'un de l'autre dans une brume luisante,  
Où des heures affamées sèment, récoltent, et sèment encore  
La moisson du printemps, de l'été, de l'automne,  
— Rayonnante marée sur la mer grise et froide,  
Le flot de la moisson illumine l'hiver.  
O ce contact éternel! qui flotte, ondoie,  
Doucement, calmement,  
Comme une vague de vent intime,  
Vers cette supplication qui sourd en un épanchement,  
Au coeur-même de votre essence.  
Il vous appelle avec ferveur,  
Vous verdure au plus profond de la semence,  
Unité issue de deux,  
Comme la tendre violence du soleil et de la pluie,  
Faisant route avec vous vers l'ouest,  
Chuchote des promesses de fleurs, promesses de fruits,  
Aux racines de votre commencement.



## Glass of Beer

“Hey hey, Johnnie, what do you say? Let’s go for a beer. Hey Pierre, put your music away. I’m thirsty and the river is tired of listening.”

I open my eyes at the call for a beer. I need something to wash down all this heavy red vin ordinaire. Alain slaps Pierre on his back, huddled over a guitar, then picks up a green crooked-labelled bottle. I watch while with exaggerated cartoon motions he launches the bottle at a passing barge. It arcs, spinning and sparkling in the summer sun, and falls short, splashing slightly in the Seine.

“Bande de salopards! ”, shouts the captain and floats by. Alain retorts with a French obscenity I miss. Something about a pig and someone’s mother. There are words I’ve heard under this Paris bridge I never heard while working in that stinking Dunkirk refinery.

I wonder while waking and collecting my scattered thoughts. How long have I been here? Weeks maybe. I forget. Concrete beds make me forget a lot of things, except my stiff neck and the smell of piss.

“I’m Popeye the sailor man, toot toot! ” Alain croaks in my ear and steps out of a television behind me. That makes the lady with the camera laugh and take our picture. It makes me want to get drunk. “Alain, you buffoon, help me up,” I say and wish I did not have to move from under my tree in the middle of this island. I glance at the Louvre, half expecting someone to fly out a window with the Mona Lisa.

The sun is falling behind the city. Hitch-hikers and backpacks circle together like mushrooms clustering in the damp greenness of the park behind us. Foreign melodies and wisps of hashish smoke drift carressingly through my mind.

We glide up the steps as in a bubble, spinning giddily out of a backwater, and into the frothing city. On Pont Neuf I hesitate before the blackened spires of Notre Dame. People and cars flow constantly across the river. I feel as though I have stood up too quickly. Above us, his most lecherous majesty, Henri IV, rides forever motionlessly.

We could go to either bank, but Alain wants his friends. He knows where to find a curious audience and a wall to lean on. His gaunt face and nervous black eyes are those of a cornered animal. He told me once that he was sent from Israel because he would not be a soldier. We turn to the student’s quarter. On the way Pierre stops a sad American girl.

“Where are you going? ” She does not answer. “Come with me. We will see some people, drink some beer.” She simply takes his hand and follows without a word.

Once across, Alain tells us to take a sidewalk table at a corner cafe, where he says, grinning as wide as a spunky but homeless sailor can, “They all love me here.”

From inside there is laughter. The girl sulks and Alain opens his guitar case. I tilt backwards and push my battered scout’s hat forward. No one will know I am watching. A tall bald negro in sequinned tights passes by. “You are brilliant,” I remark. He nods.

18th Birthday Poem  
(for Heather)

On the wind  
you are as  
I am, laughing,  
whirling as  
we are blown  
laughing,  
whirling  
in the same motion  
as we are  
laughing  
in the same breath

David R. Hayes

Mr. Facing-Both-Ways

Before  
we turn  
the light  
inside us  
down, burn  
in effigy  
he who we  
once were

Think, then  
how much is  
there to learn  
from him, before  
he came  
to be  
bad company

David R. Hayes

There was all the thoughts  
Of the motorcycle freaks  
Who were working there  
To get the bucks  
To get the time  
To ride across the country  
Like poets.  
They work until they can go  
With unemployable assurance.  
They don't mind  
Fucking up that system,  
In fact,  
They jump onto the opportunity.  
Without that one thought;  
That hope at the front,  
They would die in those conditions  
Which force a man  
To give his hand  
At the command of a rooted machine.  
But with that thought  
They ba like hating sheep  
And wait like Christians  
For that time  
When they mount their Commandoes  
And take control  
And go.

M. Foley

I have been made sick.  
The useless, self-gratifying,  
    and false confessions  
Put into long-winded  
    beautiful words,  
The lonely, righteous beings  
    examining hungers,  
So aware and sure of  
    inadequacies,  
Have filled me up  
And made me vomit.

M. Foley

Down the black steep fire escape,  
Along the dog shit dirt alley,  
With brown paper lunch bag,  
Mr. Freeman walks to the bus.  
A cigarette hangs from the old athlete.

And in the Mint he cleans his nose  
Of the black soot  
And wipes the same  
Out of the corners of his eyes.

And in the Mint no one talks of failure  
And no one looks.

For awhile we shall rest.  
We shall be animals.

Out of twenty-four,  
Eight are given,  
Three more to be able to give the eight,  
Seven go to sleep,  
While the rest are divided  
Into life.

At day's end  
The once dreaming mind  
Has no more energy.  
At week's end  
The drink, cars, and whores.

So short the time.  
So short the breath.

And when Mr. Freeman laughs  
The ten pin thunder,  
The drink is strong  
And cascades from his wordless mouth,  
And the equal women  
Pull his penis.

And Mr. Freeman,  
Mr. Freeman never cries  
About or for anything  
Anymore.

M. Foley

Great words  
Cannot even  
Clap.

**M. Foley**



Lonely by a firelight sadness  
That soft, longing upstream voice  
Whispers the plaintive sermon of your absence,  
Caresses the tender living of an arching wave,  
Like the waking warm-scented breath  
So alive in the rustling green shoots  
— the new northland marshgrass.

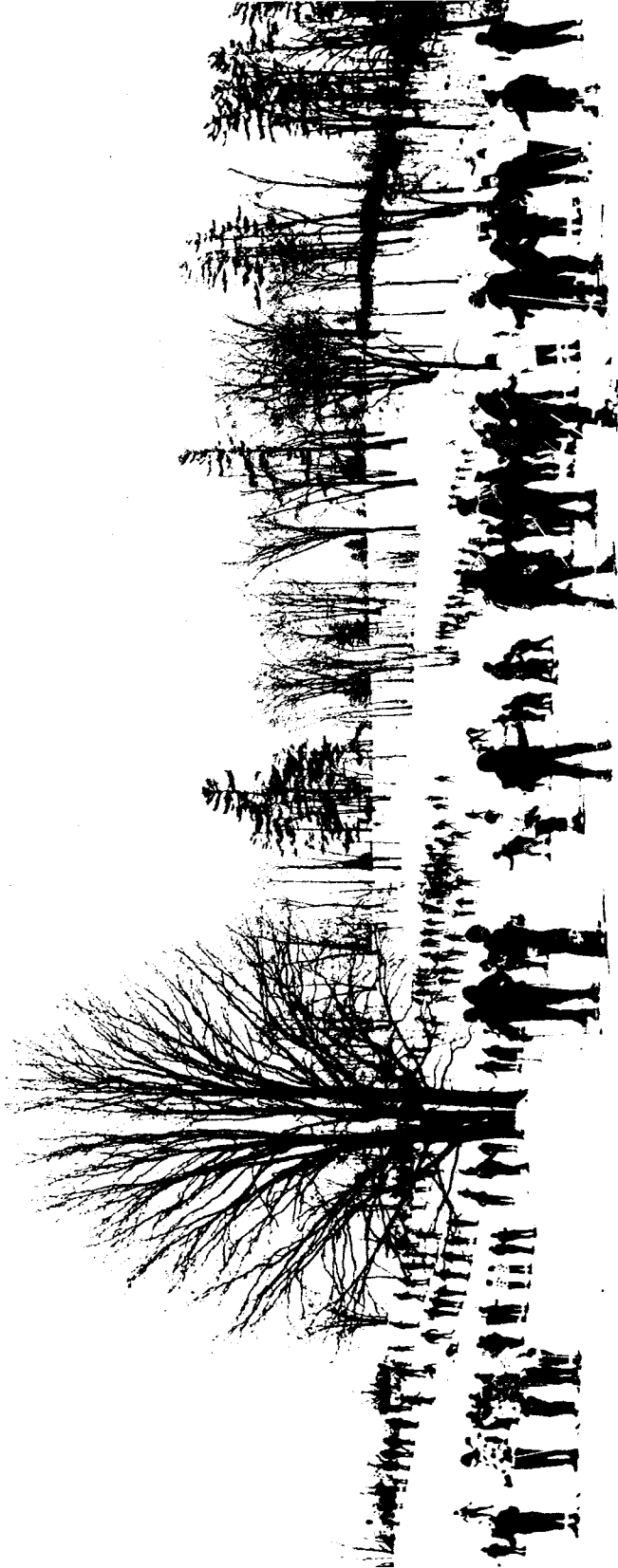
**J.W. Anderson**

## BIRTH OF A SKETCH

tall  
stiff as the trunk from which it came  
this immobile tool of communication  
spreads  
lead residue  
as it discovers the white emptiness  
under a sharp  
inquiring point.

tight  
nervous scratches inch across  
around, under each other  
until the lead and paper both  
become softened to one another  
and from this mutual relationship  
movement is conceived;  
mobile forms protect  
a shaded background.

Andrea Narvey



## NUITANCE

La nuit me regarde  
De son froid regard d'automne.

Je détourne les yeux  
Mais n'aperçois qu'elle  
Qui me harcèle de sa noirceur,  
De son néant,  
Et de son désespoir.

Ainsi, je me fais l'impression  
de me rebâtir en moi-même  
Pour fuir,  
. . . m'éloigner,  
M'échapper des faibles lumières;  
Si faibles en réalité  
Qu'elles ne contribuent  
Qu'à mieux alourdir  
La nuit déjà trop lourde.

Et pourtant,  
Le temps m'affirme  
Qu'à la bonne heure  
Viendra le jour.

Mais ne sera-t-il brumeux?  
Ou même orageux?  
. . . comme les secousses de mon âme.

Aussi, je sais que la nuit  
Fera demi tour.

Mais si elle décidait de revenir . . .

MARCEL BEAULIEU

## SOMMEILLANCE

J'ai un poème sans encre  
Qui erre au détour de mon être.  
Là, les mots sont givrés  
Car j'y vais mourir,  
J'y vais dormir sous mes rimes  
Sans ne jamais murmurer;  
J'y vais rêver au lointain  
Dans le grand désert de la pensée.

Lentement je m'efface de tout,  
Je ferme mes yeux à la vie  
Je n'attends rien,  
Je n'espère rien,  
J'y vais mourir et je le sais.

Quelques lettres encore  
Et je serai prêt à quitter,  
A ne plus revoir.  
Quelques larmes encore  
Et je serai mort à jamais.  
Encore un instant volé  
Mais mon sang s'obscurci,  
Mes mains jettent un dernier regard,  
Et ma voix tremble de ne plus pouvoir.  
Un tout dernier moment  
Avant que mon encre ne se sèche;  
Un tout dernier regard  
Avant que ne s'éveille la mort.

Déjà, les voiles de la nuit  
Etendent sur moi la noirceur;  
Je pars. Je marche vers l'infini.

Je suis mort et je dors . . .

MARCEL BEAULIEU

## Cosmic Eclair

It was a celebrant evening that we  
sat in a mood by a toffeling sea . . .  
Foam and wind and the ashes of fire  
Circling light in a blackening gyre.

Miles of sand in a billowy white  
Chocolate stars on a turkish delight,  
Cosmic Eclair as we took to the air  
melting, caressing the bright.

Kath Slemin

“Marat, there is nothing outside the body”  
crunch crunch crunch

Munch your oreos  
at the end of the line  
and tell me of your physical dreams  
I can hear them sliding down your ego  
like the oreo creams

Kath Slemin

I am here.  
my body limits.  
you are there.  
miles in mere inches.  
close enough to touch  
and yet I don't.  
I know  
I won't.  
Only the night  
soothes me  
when I know that  
darkness  
does not reward  
the searching hand  
and I know  
you are  
completely  
unreachable.

**Kath Slemin**

## TOBERMORY TO OWEN SOUND

Aboard the twenty passenger Blue Bird coach, safety yellow moving nest, "Protecting America's Future" above two caricatures of overfed cherubs commuting where? To their all white school? Driver, semi-sweet-chocolate-brown shirt, sunglasses with chrome frames, limburger holes like a spaceman's Swiss watchband, whiting gray hair Elvis combed with the widest apart teeth, two wallets in his rear pockets, chained to belt loops. He is cheerful with the elderly lady who has lost her ticket: "One thing for sure, I know you had it." Minutes after, journey begun, she lurches forward of the prohibited white line, proffers a pink paper. "Knew I had it somewhere." "It's like anything else, eh," with one hand holding, opening a green metal box, filing ticket, "if you look long enough, you'll find it." He warms to his work in the morning sun, rolls his sleeves to above the elbows, eyes dramatically (safely) fixed on the road, back straight. He leans to adjust the fresh air vent. Dust lifts from the floor into sunlight. Rattling comes from under the bus; he fiddles with a switch: the choke. "Something I can't figure," turning to the passenger in the front seat, implicit audience, to his right, "you take this morning": we leave twenty minutes behind schedule; you watch, now, we'll be in Owen Sound terminal ten minutes early. Happens no matter when you leave, you get there with time to spare." Returns to the road, pondering. Flashes a loose peace sign (V) combined with a wave to a passing dumptruck. Another to a coveralled farmer on a green tractor; a blue bus's driver. "We were going to throw a Christmas party. For all the guys pushing truck and bus up and down this strip. Highway 6. At least a hundred of us, regular, anyways. Some party that would turn out to be, eh? Wild times. Yes, sir." Late greeting to the passing ad on a bread truck. "No crown to the road here. Below Lion's Head? Beautiful. You don't have to touch the wheel all the way to Wiarton." We wait. Off six onto the road for Lion's Head. Five light planes tethered in a field. "See the blue and white one? It's just like mine, except for the colour. Loaded. Automatic pilot, the works. See the silver one? The twin, there. A guy from London owns her. A hundred and ten grand. Plus change. He's a neurosurgeon. What does he use it for? Fishing." Lion's Head main street. Sand-blasted red brick buildings. Blond girl, seventeen, long blue jeans, turquoise jersey, sitting on the curb with a suitcase. "Hop on, doll. Did you think we'd forgot you? Not on your life. There's lots of time." She smiles, eyes shy, big and sky blue. He can't reach her. Door shut, we again pass the planes. "Fishing trips. Plenty of room for a charter business around here. Up to the Soo in no time flat." We turn south, Highway six. He checks his watch. Pulls up his trouser legs. Folds down the sun visor. "Pretty soon we pass a lake I just discovered the other day. After all these years I find a lake. Right where I never looked, I guess. That's why I never get sick of this run, eh? Nothing stops changing. The trees have just come out full. Now they turn colour. And the cattle? Skinny and weak after the winter. Look at them now, eh? Always something different."



Evil waves  
Sluggishly flaxen  
On a concrete beach

But sometimes — light walks wild upon those waters  
Spreading circled colours  
Through infinity  
Like living in a flash of sun  
On polished steel!

Sally

I have torn great rivers of time  
that dripped, bled and bleed with life.  
and stabbed red-tinsled fork lines  
into laughing children as they leered.

And now I rest reading my Bible  
mouthing words that taking flight  
drip-droppings on baby's heads  
turn to acid and erode their skulls.

Tonight I'll dig up mouldy bodies  
Bled dry, once beautiful  
seduce them and inject into their blind mouths  
my life fluid mingled with tears.

**Mark Parent**



Slithering sliding hands  
ejaculate pennies into  
the sky

Falling bubblegum  
coats your hair  
and things rest

**don kazansakis**