



Donald Osborne

MADLINE AT LION ROCK

A slack November afternoon:
my feet trace the setting sun
south toward Lion Rock, your story begins.
You have prayed to this mute rock,
in your own image, you
have named her. Outgoing tide
sucks barnacles from her gray
flanks, from her mane sparse vegetation springs.
Nearly caught by the incoming tide,
I lay cold hands against this cold shadow,
against muted colors and barnacles
as if the warmth of my own body
could bring her to life, her face
gazing into late winter sun.
You came to record the ebb and flow,
exact posture, the crouch of heavy paws
back into a sea frothing below her
giant tongue. You work her image
like Passover bread, it is held, eaten
in daily communion with earth, sky and sea.
A lonely gull wings the farthest point,
this moment of being fed.

DIAN WILLIAMS

TIME PAST

Morning breaks
From the mountaintops
Blue oceans sink a setting sun
Days pass
Stars shine
Moons sliver and grow
People I meet
Are curious and new
I wish I had spent
Time past with you.

MICHAEL F. GRUDZINSKI



FOR K.E.R.

There is a woman
in the north
carving totems
in small wood.
Her knife moves
making cuts
years before this time.
Pieces of dry wood
Indian and Finnish
in nature with
an influence
of drunken Irish
scarring their surface.
She moves her scalpel
like a pen putting
words on paper,
pieces of small paper
she sends me
every now and then.
Words that help
keep us alive.

MICHAEL MARSH

LEADERSHIP

who's in charge here!?
i demand to see the boss
it's all fouled up
a near total loss
whups!!

here he comes
down from the sky
standin' before me
givin' me the eye
grinnin'

I quit son
You have a try
Goodbye

E. A. ANDERSON

ARMS RACE

Nuclear balance
slowing pendulum swing
to where zerotime
awaits the final touch
of a madman
who would cut
the hair of
damocles' sword

E. A. ANDERSON

SONG OF THE ONCE ROYAL LABORER

The prince has had his baby,
The Crown has had its due,
Here royalty has come and gone,
But Crown is still not through.

The trees, they come a' stubbled,
And houses come unbuilt,
Though storms make some a' rubbed,
Awashed away with silt.

Is it just pocketbook
Which makes us take a second look,
When homes and families opt to go
With storms and Economic's flow?

Nay, I think it could now be
Only storms could make me flee;
For only in such cold exchange
Could my life so rearrange.

Yea, only winter's chilled bold force
Could alter our established course; —
It would not be my choosing,
Ourselves resigned to losing.

Thus now a rain untold behold —
All property's in view!
But if we make a claim on it
I'm sure they'll sue.

So in less than poverty I'll speak,
E'en when forecasts look so bleak
(at risk of being called a freak)
When happiness is all I seek.

So what's the hullabaloo with the bank
We get based on our class and rank,
Is it just the cause we know
That makes the flow of cash so slow?

I do not think that this is it,
So slow down just a little bit.
We all know that we can't just quit,
Although the gutters wait for spit.

So unresigned we'll go our way
Without enough to earn our pay
To earn enough to have a meal
By labor got by our appeal.

There are few homes for labor's young,
Although there's songs that they have sung,
Some ladder has a missing rung —
But friends are good to be among!

So now upon a ground we stand,
Proclaiming this is God's own land.
Our hopes are modest, not too grand,
And we will jump to lend a hand.

Nay, we think it might e'er be
That we might ever own a tree,
Nor is the thought so all-fired strange
That now our lives we might arrange.

Could it be a pocketbook
Which makes our hopes for love forsook,
When we reach out ourselves to grow —
Alas, a love I do not know.

DARREN MacWILLIAMS

Claudia McNulty



NORTHWEST BETRAYAL

We come from New England
where winter is honest.
It shrieks at us:
it barrens every tree
and hardens the ground,
licking it with the clear viciousness
of ice.

But here we are deceived.
Here winter mocks us
with mild wet unfrozen days.
Bushes and lawns are lush,
and late roses bloom.

How can we sense our danger
in the moist and pungent earth,
how find the rot under cozy emerald moss
until, roofless, we are bared to Heaven,
howling with the endless insult
of slippery dripping green?

ELIZABETH HOBBS



BAUCIS & PHILEMON

This is that piercing moment, one winter day
When we have found at last our missing dog
Dead and matted in the roadside ditch;
When the skeletal tree we seldom notice
Suddenly, out of the corner of an eye,
Moves perhaps a single step closer;
When our children at play in a far field
Seem many years older,
Their chests grown big as caves,
Where hearts in darkness beat most dreadfully
As the tree of death outside
Moves perhaps a single step closer.

The sky fills with blackbirds whispering by,
A long swarm composing itself on the tree
Which stands up bare as the veins of a leaf.
They pause and then divide, half of them falling
On matted brown grass to feed.
Each time these shift their ground
Like windblown leaves
A few more drop to their midst
From the harsh black foliage of the tree.

We crouch here quietly, side by side,
Two dark caverns in a sheer cliff,
Two beating, branching culs-de-sac
While daylight rages outside.

JEAN FARLEY



LOW TIDE

The lichen-flecked stones
Of the bluff's bent staircase
Grow green in ragged descent to the tidemark —
Bleached shell splinters,
Obsidian popweed,
Drying in tangles of mermaid's ribbon.

Rippled sand
Sculptures the tide's ebb'd acres.
Sky puddles blur
In the salt wind's sweeping.
Gull wings arc on the sea's creased mirror.
And bloom into spinnakers
Of beachball colors.

CHARMAINE SEVERSON