



ALISON SEIFFER

FAT DAYS

These are the fat days,
The butter-cream-'n'-honey days.
Opulence of health,
Even a-tinge-of-wealth days,
Where rolling in love
And the body's pleasures
Is mud-puddle play.
They will never come again.
By choice,
Some of their luxury is already
Surrendered to the lean future,
And to the lean present,
The hungry, empty present of some,
The dark, lonely present of others.
Tomorrow will ask
For a fuller circle,
A thinning of the cream
So that many more can drink of the cup.
Honey, a teaspoon, colors
With sweet pleasure all it touches.
Perhaps we need not grow poor
Completely — perhaps the honey
And mud-puddle play remain
As states of mind,
Irreducible by quantity,
Wealth by right of life.
These are the fat days.
We grow leaner
Even while storing for winter.

GAYLE HUNTER SHELLER

JOURNEY

Some time after the roofs fall in
the cars begin to come

on weekends the cars go to the country
this is the country

an old road has been found
crossing under a new one

the right clothes are put on
for visiting nobody who lives there

a broad footprint has been deciphered
crossing a cellar
in one of the empty houses
by the buried road

someone has driven a whole day
to declare how long it has been there

nobody knows anything
about who was here before

but nothing is real
until it can be sold

so a nice young couple
has cast in plaster

the broad foot
that went somewhere

the authentic white sole
rising from the white ground

so that people with cars
can take the foot home

to climb on their
blank walls

W. S. MERWIN

POETRY

PIANO

CALL THE HOUR

It's the last night of July,
9 P.M., the sun almost gone from sight
closing out high summer
the air clear as water,

and nine strong bells from City Hall
call the hour; this hour when
sky will blacken and offer
stars and a white moon. Violet is

the air's color now, a deepening
purple lastlight caught with the bells
in swaying uppermost branches of elms,
all a glory and clamor

of change stirring
in the windy bowl of high branches,
in the black leaves, a new darkening,
insight, revolution.

CYNTHIA HOYT

You were the smoke of the saxophone
lingering in my ears.

The clarinet dart-dashing
through my mind.
You were the spark of the snare
and the rustle of the cymbal.

The sly bass
who prompted young men
the sizzling coronet
who blasted them from their seats to dance.

I was the thread in the seams
holding it all together piece by piece
chord by chord

I was the ivory skin geared by your prints
the fever who late night stumbled alone with you
every phrase
every drink
every cigarette.
I was the echo whirling rumbling
alone after each gig.

ADRIENNE FLAGG

IN A WORLD OF TAKING, THE MISTAKE

Down and down into your own regard
you double, dangling a bucket,
to take a shine. What's the secret?
You're not interested in anything

there's only one of. So the mirror
is amazing, and you find yourself inside it
to be deep. If you had another
fifty years, you'd feel this

wonderment at being.
Framed in a standstill, your head
in the clouds, your likeness
in mind, you fall

in love with reason. This
is the mistake. You think too much
of your life, far from oceans,
far from rivers, far

from streaming. You think 'death
I can bear' — this image of the self
in the calm of a held pail.

But the catch in the clarity comes then:
to look like this you mustn't ever
be touched or moved again.

HEATHER McHUGH

AMERIFUCKED

America is waiting for a plastic Jesus
that will never come
Fascist policies have you on the run
Corporate asshole
suit and tie
rape the people see them die
Capitalist fuckers seeking fortune and fame
plastic money you play their game
America I feel for you
all the bullshit that you do
You'll have money but will you eat
when the war comes to your street?

It won't be long till all the money's gone

So
take
your Jesus
him hold dear
Just remember all
we have a lot to
fear

ALPO

DAMAGES

Why must you keep bees
she said
We don't need honey
Our bread is thick and rough
and sweet enough

Do not go as a beekeeper
to the white boxes that look like bombs
The danger huddles there
swarmed crawling every way
waiting for you to forget your swathing

Let the bees fly free
We do need them for that
tramping from flower to flower
with feet bearing gold

They hoard gold too
packed in their own strange boxes
Leave it there, remember Midas
Go to Greece if you must
but eat your bread plain

ELIZABETH HOBBS