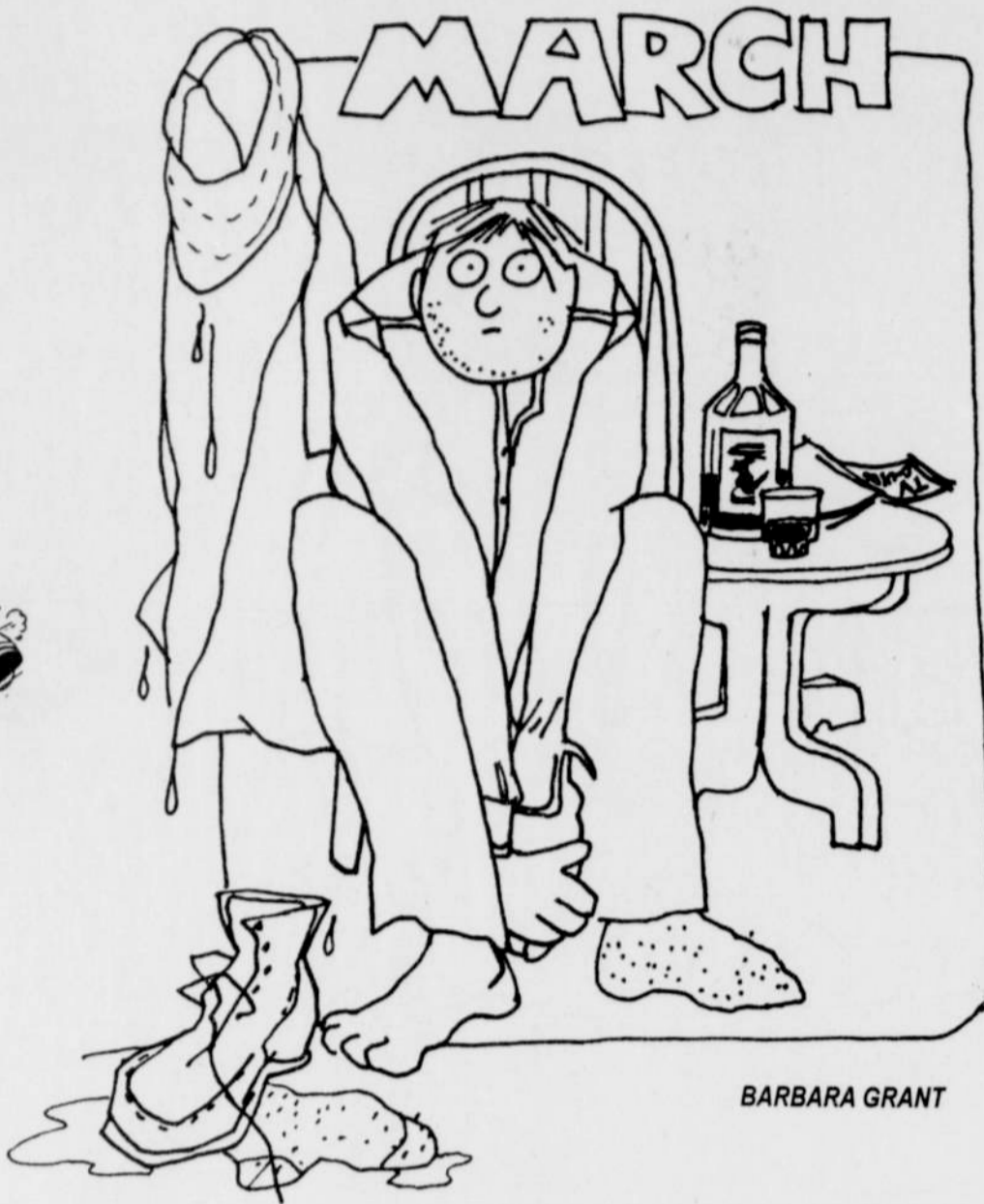


RED RAG IN THE ROAD

A red cloth with sex on it  
abandoned on a country road.  
Boy's milk, maybe? No.  
The slender white necks  
of the geese bobbing  
in a farmer's frontyard:  
webbed feet flapping  
on solid ground.  
A child's tricycle.  
Brown dog sleeping on warm asphalt  
barely lifting its dusty curious fur.  
Cheerfully alarmed  
call of crows.  
Wispy blue smoke  
against the lively green firs.  
Forever green.  
Wan sunlight.  
Opening the road up  
and curving breezily.  
Musically trickling creek.  
The first strong spring sunshine  
suffusing all affectionate energy.  
And I am whispering to myself  
about the delicate orgasms  
a fluttering bird might make  
nesting in the brown curls  
of your pubic. When I think  
thoughts like this,  
the front wheel might fall off  
the red moving car.  
Uncertain I am.  
Should I turn around,  
drive back and see  
if that red corduroy rag  
is still sticky, sopping,  
moist with sex? Emotions  
never deceive me, even  
when ludicrously wrong.  
Which young lovers recently  
wiped themselves off?  
The winter white bodies  
exposed to the rays of love.  
How I long to be one of them.

~WALT CURTIS



BARBARA GRANT

GYPSY OF THE SOIL

He told me I had beautiful  
hands, sculpted. I looked,  
they were still  
my hands. Sculpted,  
indeed, by work  
and unaccustomed  
graspings, at the end  
of my own arms I might  
call them interesting  
largeboned, strong.  
My grandmother's.  
From the washtub, milking cows  
to sink.  
Fingernails flat as if some  
steamroller  
pressed those genes  
for work not polish.  
Yes longfingered, deserving  
of rings, but they bind  
the callus where the hammer fits,  
the sledge  
slips across the palm.  
The fortune teller said scars  
from Atlantis, mind crossed by heart.  
These hands  
seed, gather earthworms, pull rock,  
roots from clay, tend even rows  
an ancient pulse  
steady in mine. Grandmother's last  
grip  
squeezed in a language I didn't know  
yet learned, my hands grew wide,  
capable, flat. Beautiful, yes, and  
sculpted by snow,  
the year's winds, the sweaty passage,  
hope.  
They circle the warm cup  
opening, closing upon the legacy —  
a gypsy of the soil.



~MARNIE PURPLE

SRING RAIN IN OREGON

usually an oregon rain is just mist  
that softly moistens the landscape  
and abundantly produces flora  
and other types of vegetation  
but this deluge on a march day  
is stinking muck sucking stuff  
which both combats the drought  
of last year and prepares the way  
for the annual vernal rebirth  
by eroding rivuleted canals down  
into the muddy fertile terrain  
so that microbiotic creatures can  
squirm their ways and etch tracks  
through suburbia helping to add  
humus to the murky foundations  
for plant life to feed from while  
simultaneously and symbiotically  
reaping the benefits of oxygen  
provided by herbomorphc entities  
for water is more than a drink  
or thirst quenching liquid  
and all aspects of it help shape  
this imperfect spheroidal planet  
both above and below its surface  
more exquisitely than michelangelo  
sculpted the elegant body of david  
or the bemuscled torso of a macho  
godhead angrily pointing adam  
and eve out of paradise forever  
as well as much more for this  
sparkling bubbling fluid runs deep  
in terrestrial existence recycled  
from vapor to water to ice and  
that is rain for ya even oregon  
rain

~ARTHUR HONEYMAN



POETRY

In a time of extreme hostility mere civility is a radical act  
~MPMc

SAY GOODBYE TO THE SAD RAGS OF WINTER

I walked around and around  
the barren horse-chestnut tree  
and considered all my days one  
until I heard the wind shake  
the branches with its murmurings

I watched the light move from branch  
to branch until the tree became a stream  
of fire in which I saw birds dancing  
chanting canticles to the wintry sun  
a distant bloody ball of frozen fire

I looked again and saw a school  
of winged dolphins sporting there  
and among them rose Leviathan  
its colossal bulk porpoising into  
space blowing a fountain of fire

The very sky became a field of fire  
I saw wagtails wheaters thrushes finches  
grow immense among the raging flames  
and take wing arrowing towards the sun  
I turned knowing that winter had ended.

~JOHN DIGBY



HERE COMES THE SUN



Sun comes  
streaking through the hemlock  
naked, warm.  
She comes  
mellow golden.  
A woman light,  
she feeds us.

~KATRINKA

LATE

We are not ever lost  
and nothing delays us.  
We carry the sun on our backs  
and cover such ground  
as you would not believe

We are the colonists of dark,  
the cousins of radiance,  
who shall bloom  
among you.

Listen,  
do not move in your hard beds;  
we enter your rooms  
and the candles are lit  
as if by themselves,  
stars gather,  
dreams pour  
into your pillows,  
memories of the moon,  
warm bouquets of air... Listen,

even now  
the breathing begins.

~MARK STRAND



I HAVE A SONG



I have a song  
I never sing  
But it is in my dream

~TIMMY NORTON (AGE 7)

ODE FROM THE BOOK OF CRYPTICS

When I am gone, I shall come  
on the beach wind;  
Summer hot,  
in Springtime cool.  
The down along your arms will rise to greet me  
with touch light as memory's finger in your mind  
when I am gone.

~TA HUANG CHI  
(aka ROLF G. BROWN; d 1989)



I put the seeds into the ground  
and day after day, all day long,  
light looks through dirt into the eyes  
of those oracles where they lie.  
The seeds return the sun's gaze.

From the silent fountains of earth  
passionate flowers of light  
will flow upward into brightness  
turning everyday in contemplation  
of how all that grows is on fire.

~JOHN BUCKLEY (d. 1999)

