

ELEGY FOR A CLEARCUT FOREST

Five months after your death, I come like the others
Among the slash and stumps, across the cratered
Three square miles of your graveyard:
Nettles and groundsel first out of the jumble,
Then fireweed and bracken
Have come to light where you, for ninety winters,
Had kept your shadows.

The creek has gone as thin as my wrist, nearly dead
To the world at the dead end of summer,
Guttering to a pool where the tracks of an earth-mover
Showed it the way to falter underground,
Now pearly everlasting
Has grown to honor the deep dead cast of your roots
For a bitter season.

Those water- and earth-led roots decay for winter
Below my feet, below the fir seedlings
Planted in your place (one out of ten alive
In the summer drought),
Below the small green struggle of the weeds
For their own ends, below grasshoppers,
The only singers now.

The chains and cables and steel teeth have left
Nothing of what you were:
I hold my hands over a stump and remember
A hundred and fifty feet above me branches
No longer holding sway. In the pitched battle
You fell and fell again and went on falling
And falling and always falling.

Out in the open where nothing was left standing
(The immoral equivalent of a forest fire),
I sit with my anger. The creek will move again,
Come rain and snow, gnawing at raw defiles,
Clear-cutting its own gullies.
As selective as reapers stalking through wheatfields,
Selective loggers go where the roots go.

~DAVID WAGONER



BLIND LION

In America the clocks are no longer round,
there is no need for circular motion
or the rhythmic motion of the rest of the uni-
verse.

In America there is only the black plastic face
of the machine — a blind monetary consciousness
that will rationalize and destroy anything that
is in the way of the God-like numbers that must
register in their proper places.

In America there is one direction —
the forward motion of the machine .
There is one season —
harvest.
There is one attitude —
conquest.

In America they are very sensitive,
they chase fruit flies with military combat planes.
A fine mist: the noxious breath of their men-
tality filters through the air
settling on delicate white flowers
for the children to bring home.

~RICHARD BLAKELY



WOUNDED & PISSED



who will it hit, when will it strike
what hideous provocation will be shocked shitless
they all pretend to know with their long snouts and darkened clones
but the earth hides her children with myriad chaos charm

whose side am I on...oh I love America but how must I prove it
children are grasping and I don't feel like rasping
my mind is thick with effacious pretension
rhetoric without history's blood...blinded by curse carrying Satan's flag of death
where is the glory of grisly dominance from animals with boots on

hiding from myselfs these banzai darts ricochet from dark annals
while I ponder from whence came this outraged conscience
I have been in paradise quite a few times but it was tingled with grim repose
I have loved the wilderness but not the innocence of danger
so take lively heed you children of the new left and be wary and wise
for the rolling of unwieldy forces in mistaken ardor wouldst trample thee asunder

the time is nigh to gather your gear and tighten your souls and minds
for dear freedom has been garnished and for a time gutted
let's not declare true war but ride the storm and resist from within the horror
from the earth comes strength and from the sky magic grace
leave your computers and phones at home and head for the woods with me
and we will lift the powers of freedom high and know our true selves well

~CHRIS KRAEMER



BARBARA GRANT

LETTER TO THE DEVIL

I was walkin' down the street one day
And my mind came back to me
It had been gone
Such a long, long time
I was but a child you see

I remember I was happy
Playing in the dirt
Then you put me in a prison school
And you made me go to work
With the taxes that you took from me
You just played more tricks
Building bombs and jails
And labs for scientists
Tried to brainwash me
That I ail
Tried to make me
Weak and frail

Well now my mind is back with me
And I see real well
All the tricks you played on me
All my friends I'll tell
You ole fox, you think you're smart
Your power is fading fast
You left your god, you left your heart
You weren't made to last

I will not pay taxes
As it gives energy to you
As you sit with all your whores
On your island by your pool
As you think of ways
To take away my pay
Then turn right around
And put me back to work all day

You keep getting more
I keep getting poorer
If we all stopped paying taxes
We could shut your door
Cause let me tell you dummy
We don't need you any more
We can take care of ourselves
The old, the frail, and the poor
Cause we know our love is strong
And you're rotten to the core

I was walkin' down the street one day
And my mind came back to me
It had been gone
Such a long long time
I was but a child you see
I remember I was happy
Playing in the dirt

~DANIEL ELEY

PRICKSONG

I am cursed
by a large penis
which I planted in a flower pot
in my living room.
When it grew, like a cactus,
it looked thirsty and,
being kindly at heart,
I allayed its thirst
with water. It sprouted wings.
Now it flies around the house
and sings at me.
Once I tried to shoot it down
but horrified, it shriveled up
into a ball, retracting everything
it had ever said to me. What
could I do? I didn't have the heart
to follow through. Now it tries to get
in bed with me. I am afraid.
It is so big. It looks so thirsty.
It is never satisfied. Last night
when I pushed it back, it cried.

~MARILYN COFFEY

ILLUSIONS

glimpses
of ice
frozen
clear
cold
sharp
and me
dressed in black
and silver blades
on the ice
moving with
passion and fire
quickly
clearly
sharply
slicing the air
and the ice

~KIM GELE

JAN 30, 2002, 9:15 A.M., LYING IN STATE

Last night I heard the rumbling of banks crumbling
Last night I heard the biggest, longest, loudest, lie
Happy birthday, Dick Cheney
When the fuck are you going to die?

The Smirk is back
The Sneer backs him up
Everyone can see the lie
As he reads it from transparent screens
He's rehearsed it four times
He loves the family business

~R. LOUIS RICHARDS

