



HANK GREELMAN, PORTRAIT OF HIS FATHER CRAIG (2003)

### IT'S A DOG'S LIFE

I heard it on the radio  
That America's unhappy dogs  
Respond well to Prozac.  
We could teach our kids to beg  
Before they can watch TV.

An animal trainer said  
That guard dogs kill their owners  
More often than strangers.  
Should we keep our children in cages  
To protect them?

I read in the paper  
That "Americans spend more on pets  
Than they do on books."  
We could send criminals to obedience class  
To reform them.

In the crime reports  
They call police dogs "Canine Officers."  
If we call our teachers  
"Education Officers"  
Can we get them more funding?

I heard an expert say  
That the American dog  
Eats better than a third world peasant.  
Should we send the starving kibble  
To end world hunger?

I saw it on TV  
That pet care is  
"A big consumer item."  
We could put a tax on dog shampoo  
To pay for homeless shelters.

They say  
"The dogs of war are loosed"  
Because dogs never stop chasing  
Until they have cornered their prey  
Just like our government...

~PETER MARSH

### Sticks & stones may break my bones But never my brain

~LILY DEUFEL (AGE 7)

### IN YOUR WHISPER

your mind, a blood red amaryllis  
has torn each petal from its only blossom  
leaving only a chaste stalk  
and that too illusion  
spread deep beneath the pulp of roots

how trivial,  
your beauty seems now, an untimely ghost  
hovering over the veil of your lips  
in your whisper vixens once danced bareback  
falling from rooftops like suicidal angels  
and I caught them  
now, the crook of your voice lies flat in my palm  
a chord of rosemary  
curling like a requiem  
around the soft shadows that cradle memory  
how obscene the passage of time  
when the mind and body have parted

I wonder if your life has spun out before you  
if all this time you have paced back and forth  
along a single unkempt memory  
and trying to recall have lost your way  
along the polished halls that  
reflect like circus mirrors

or perhaps a lapse in heart  
has hinged upon a single day  
and swung out like a door  
inviting you to follow the life you almost led  
and now lead inside your head  
a new family raised in the space of dreams  
children all of them with violet eyes

that follow their children around the dining room table  
and in the center a cake, a birthday, yours

a sea of candles set to ferry away a wish

and you are happy  
and do not notice the faint glow around the walls  
shimmering like stage backdrops  
and you crawl into bed that night  
your eyes flutter open  
the feeling of having forgotten to do something  
washes over your body like sour milk  
and you can't shake the chill  
that starts in your toes  
crawling up your spine  
pressing on your chest like a piano  
the keys moving on their own  
to a melody you almost know

~NICOLE ZUCKERMAN

### WHERE WATER BEGINS

For MeiLi at 20 months

Washing hands with water  
from the Bear Creek drainage,  
water stored in the city's reservoirs and let go,  
water heated by the power of water  
tumbling through turbines at Bonneville, The Dalles,  
water swirling into the drain and on down  
to the sewer, the treatment ponds, the river, the sea.  
You've learned how water pours forth from faucets,  
falls as far as it can, finds the low point, and spreads out,  
how it takes on the shape of what holds it,  
touches it, moves through it.

We turn our hands in the water  
and I wonder, "Where does water begin?"  
Is it where clouds let go their load of rain?  
Is it at the fast fading edge of ferry's wake?  
Is it the cornice of snow on the ridge line?  
Is it where frost begins to hone a grass blade?  
Is it your first sip from a cup?  
Is it where tears form in your eye?  
Is it where they dry to salt on your face?

But water is not like a story, a journey, a day,  
where you can say, "Here it starts."  
It is always welling up, flowing through and away,  
starting over, stopping, passing by again:  
The wide brown Yangtze sweeping slowly under the bridge  
between Turtle Hill and Snake Hill at Wuhan.  
The Columbia that slips and slams over the bar.  
The ocean that was between us.  
The heavy haze over Hubei the day we got you.  
The barely cool breeze off of East Lake.  
The morning rain steaming up from the hotel steps.  
The shush and blur of the waterfall in the White Swan lobby.  
The droplets split and sprayed off the wing's edge as we took off for home.  
The hose dribbling water over your toes and down the walk,  
as you filled and emptied a bucket again and again.  
The water slipping off our fingers, our palms as we rinsed them.  
The gutter outside the window spilling over with hard falling rain.  
My own sudden tears as you step off your stool  
and put a towel in my dripping hands.

Here is where water begins.

~JIM DOTT

### where the circle is broken the woman must smile at death and her mortal voice woo its window

~JUDITH GRIFFIS

### SALTY CLOUDS

I wish I had a girl so dark  
that the sea would call me friend  
like in my good old days  
of youthful power and natural ways

the mighty wave did lift heaven's light  
through the waters love I oft times played  
surfing with no board and having fun  
the laughing sun roaring overhead

this girl I want will lift the fates  
and give me strength to carry my songs  
to stranger folk so they can freak, be proud and laugh with me  
for I am blessing the heavenly fates to help me search for this mate  
maybe a child to love this world as I...to carry creation child

this thing that willeth I  
me hopeth little sorrow carry  
dream catchers tarry advise the moon  
and bring this girl for me to carry

~CHRISTOPHER KRAEMER

# POETRY

### A WARM GUN



I am a woman  
who on occasion  
contemplates murder  
today asking  
a clerk in a department store  
if she sold guns  
ones which fire with grace  
the bullet moves  
like a paper airplane  
and enters his flesh  
serenely, no blood  
just a small hole  
and a slow wave  
going out from around it  
as if it could be sleep  
but it isn't.

~JUANITA HUEBNER

### AS I MOURN MEN

How many dead,  
too soon returned  
to earth, to air,

while I still see  
and hear and dance  
without their arms about me  
or their mouths hot on mine.

Must it be the fate of women  
to live thus in memory,  
racked with loss after loss,  
warmed but unsatisfied  
by the breathy goodnight kiss  
of children, however dear?

Flesh never learns to say goodbye.

~ELIZABETH HOBBS

### A VILLAGE AGE

Storms that pass  
Taking you along  
You alone with escaping hills  
The clouds becoming feelings.  
The small lines of life  
Looking to towering faces  
Appearing and disappearing,  
Chimes roaming all outdoors  
Holding encounters.

White fawn lips passing through family pines  
The shape of locked arms whispering into deaf ears.

Rain  
Moving over oblivion  
With swirling gray brush marks,  
Sketching as it calls  
Upon touch.  
Souls touching  
Trapped in a village age.

ROBERT LEGG

### FOR MR. PARKER

What are you saying to me  
Charlie, you sound so...sad  
as you nibble at my ears,  
after laying down  
long stemmed roses  
at my feet.  
That's just you isn't it Charlie.  
Your joy mingles with your sad,  
and mine too.  
You float around this still,  
sunny room, like a lazy tear,  
suspended in the juiciest pulse  
of alive.

~THEDA SPRACKLIN