

POETRY

MEMORY OF SOME CHRISTMASTIDE

It would be silent when my father spoke.
The butler, maid and guests would listen
to the man by the fireplace, subtly positioned,
with a fine cigar, the tip just broke,
an expressive hand, poised to choke
the smallest sound: an ice cube glistening.
Then he would screech how he hated them all.
A few would laugh, the more nervous folk,
and the rest would assume my father's ambition
was for them to leave. "Oh, it's just his medicine,"
sung mother, leading father by the satin coat.
And he would scream how he hated her too.

~JOEL IAN BELL

LIGHT THE DARKNESS

Winter's dark now clings close; cold has forced us in.
At dusk, in a clear sky, bright Venus begins to burn.
Upon the hills and fields frost's silent crystals now begin.
Geese make one last honking flight, two owls hoo-hoot in turn.

Indoors, we gather toward the warmth and lights are lit.
Old stories get told once more, sweet memories revive.
Songs are lifted, our voices join in joyful spirit,
As we praise the great thing it is to be alive.

Yet some among us on these nights have only lonely cold.
They make their homes huddled on the streets, crammed in cars.
They may have no memories to cherish when they're old.
Hunger burns in bellies, souls are bound in scars.

Take a moment, then, to reach within and offer out your hand.
It can be, that we may each, alone and together, stand.

~JIM DOTT

"THERE ARE CENTURIES"

There are centuries that wear white veils.
Whole dawns with the sun on the hilltop
Like an orange deer, and trees lift their webs.
Blue loves in white rooms, days
When the grass is paid, the throat of the stars
Watered, and we bless the fog.

~WILLIAM LANE

THIS BE THE VERSE

They fuck you up, your mum and dad.
They may not mean to, but they do.
They fill you with faults they had
And add some extra, just for you.

But they were fucked up in their turn
By old fools in old-style hats and coats,
Who half the time were sappy-stern
And half at one another's throats.

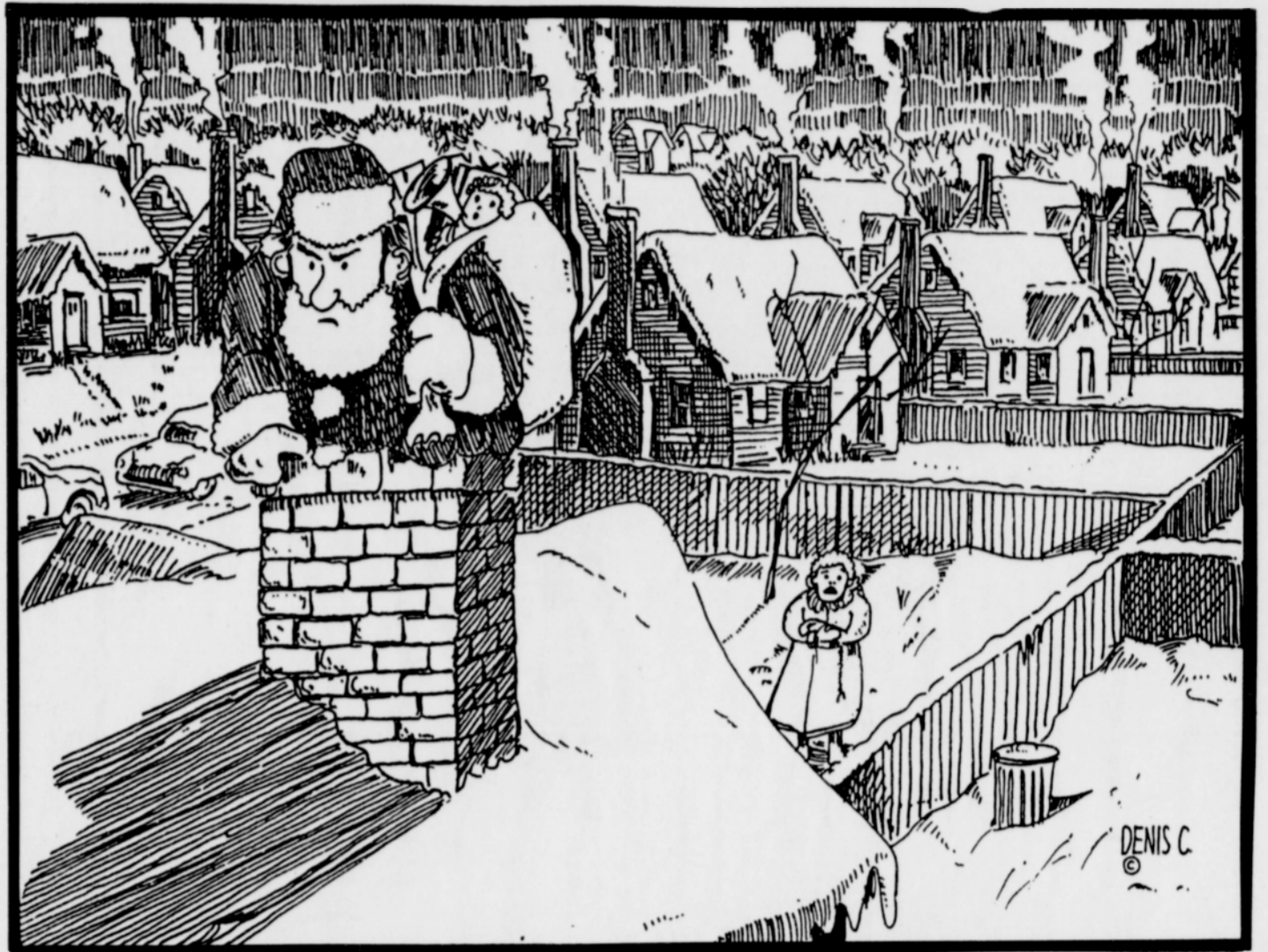
Man hands on misery to man.
It deepens like a coastal shelf.
Get out as early as you can,
And don't have any kids yourself.

~PHILIP LARKIN

CEDAR

deadfallen queen, cedar, you who
rested the eagle and rose the drum
your whispered form on their canoes.
once we slept sheltered by the edgeless night
within your etched-disc of needles, dry
the moon in a crescent sung
dripping tears toward the grove.
(I had one dream
of each breath
from his fish mouth
sent up
to the water surface
and circles appeared there.)
you moss hair, a draping
spread over the exhausted furrows
caked blood
in black earth.
alone,
mutilated in a grid of barbed fences
invention against the wild born to earth
the salamander withstood fire
his closed eyes see you.
a sweep of silence
but you did live, dead
I still hear you crying
my heart is your funeral.

~JUANITA HUEBNER



"For crying out loud Nelson, you don't have to do it...The kids are staying at the university this year." (Denis C. Bourland, 1932 -2003)

SPLIT KINDLING

With my hatchet filed to a feather
like some guillotine in that French revolt,
I take a quiet bolt of cedar
by the neck, set it on the block.
This wood is wise; it starts to chant.

Up and split down, up and split down,
my hatchet hand chops steady as a butcher's
cleaver one inch from my thumb
while thin bodies of sticks fall singing
in a crisscross heap.

I cut this old growth from the swamp —
cedar kindling the color of hot flesh,
the crux of every revolution in its grain —
for all the cold inward mornings
I need to hear the song in new wood fire.

~GEORGE VENN

MEGADEATH

Megadeath is calling you
Into his sweet embrace
From which there is no leaving
Ah, sweet, so sweet the smell
Left in his passing
How final, how final is his kiss
How deep, how profound the rest he brings
Do not look surprised
You've rushed to meet him all your days
And now the day is met
The appointment kept
His hand reaches for you
Your heart yields
You go

~MICHAEL EMRYS

A BREATH OF AIR

I walked when love was gone
Out of the human town,
For an easy breath of air.
Beyond a break in the trees,
Beyond the hangdog lives
Of old men, beyond girls:
The tall stars held their peace.
Looking in vain for lies
I turned, like earth, to go.
An owl's wings hovered, bare
On the moon's hills of snow.

And things were as they were.

~JAMES WRIGHT

MILLENNIUM 2000 AD

See where the skull of Man is rudely swept
Upon the pock-marked shore, time and again.
Each wave rolls up the toothy specimen
That ebbing falls, poor salty thing, unwept,
Among the heaving motes of sand and shells
As if it were no more than drifting wood,
Nor once, in other eons, understood
Even the stary clustered sentinels
Of space, and that sweet pastime, love's caprice.
This mind, in final planes of knowledge, learned
Especially and well the arts of war,
But not, nor seldom dreamed of learning peace
Which was the subtler art, not wisely spurned
By him whose windy shell now strikes the shore.

~ELEANORE BAKER-HENSEL

HOROSCOPE

The moon floats above us, Orion's
Lost discus, hurled in another season. Polaris
Beckons us, Pegasus rides toward heaven.
Our kiss casts a penumbra on each face.
How am I to know what love is? Gibbous
Venus is a distant muse, her yellow
Meridians swathed in shadow, bouquets
Of nebulae her only guarantee.
Gravity, the comet's alibi,
Provides the heart with its rhetoric.
In the planetarium of debris,
A phosphorus wand tattoos the zodiac.
All winter, above the dead trees, Orion flees
The Scorpion and seeks the Pleiades.

~JENNIFER ROSE

THE VICTIMS OF THE WAR

Some victims don't know they are being used.
Some victims know they are being used and keep on fighting.

Jessica Lynch was a victim of the theatrics of war. The Iraqi people wanted to return her but the Americans wanted to use her to stage a rescue so they would look good to the media and the world and the Iraqis would look evil.

The American people are victims of this war, too. We have a president so desperate to correct his father's mistakes that he is making even more mistakes and pulling the Americans with him. Pulling them into a war that should have never happened — making them victims of his war

Some people are willing to fight for what they believe in, and there are people who fight even if they think it's wrong.

Who are the real victims of war?

~ANNA MYERS