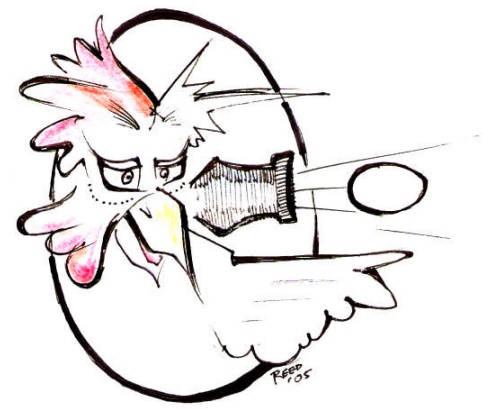


Free!

POULTRY BROADSIDE



Poetry in small doses

ISSUE NO. 7 MAR. 2006

“What no wife of a writer can ever understand is that a writer is working when he’s staring out the window.”
- Burton Rascoe

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IDEAS OF GRACE

Moments of desolation when life and love collide
drowning us beneath the weight of their inevitability

You pause and look back at me as if I were cancer
How can this be?
Why is this happening?
Who do you think you are?
Isn't history the antidote for bad judgment?

Fidelity is so fluid these days
So much expected in return

I tell you about my parents
My long suffering mother
My long silent father
Married 58 years until death
“Those were days of denial, when relationship
was abduction and silence a woman’s ransom.”

I don't argue I hide my point of view

How could you understand
there is glory in surrender
if made for harmony

Or that the liberation of the blind
is conceived in a bed of forgiveness

*Charles P. Ries
Milwaukee, WI*

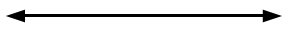
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veined anatomy

Mirrored glass, to
murder ones youth.
I look to find;
my lines move
like the truckers
mileage,
midnight radio
UFO's
the summer rains;
dirt roads and
horse trails,
unfiltered Pall Malls.
The tall clowns
with half smiles
riding out to
loneliness:
polished chrome
biting into the
night air.
Grinding teeth
grinding gears
kicking up dust
like a mad bull
in a rodeo,
hot in its
veined anatomy
the smell of diesel
and transmission
fluid.

Yesterday's ghost,
taking its load
to market.

*James Ray Scott
Cypress, CA*



IT'S NOT HARD

to be beautiful after 50 -
It just takes so damn much longer.

*Chocolate Waters
New York, NY*

the foot

the patrons
red with drink
screwing their elbows
into the counter

a placenta of smoke
shifts the room

some retard is dancing
with his socks on his hands
and I am too exhausted
to fight him

before the woman
three stools down
can peddle
her story
I ask why
she colors her braids
with cow piss
and fake a sneeze

somehow
though I'd rather
get drunk
on the roof
of a burning shed
I am memorably
struck
by the hate
of idiots
in a dilapidated
shithole
called 'the foot'
(preferably 'the athletes foot')

the addiction here
is the generosity
of my own idiot
hate

*Sean Kilpatrick
Detroit, MI*

upwards

and i'm sorry that i have never
bled pure sunlight over
the people i love and
i'm sorry that my hands are tied

and i am not blind but
standing here in my back yard
i'm beginning to think that
i may be lost

i'm beginning to see how i
will fail my children

how the promise of cancer will be
my gift to them
or the threat of aids or a
world filled with zealots who want
only to kill

who believe that the slaughter
of innocents will be rewarded

and what happens is that i
find myself wasting too much time
talking about things that
i'll never be able to change

i wake up in the first grey light
of morning in a stranger's bed and
feel nothing but afraid

i am only the empty
grasping hand that my father
always told me i would be

*John Sweet
Endicott, NY*

The Chicken Dance

In his defense, Virgil Butler
Was just trying to make a living.
Killing was in his blood (he'd
Already done time for shoot
Ing a man outside Bob's
Booze Hut on the outskirts of Montgomery)
So the job at Tyson was a
Natural. Every night
M through F Virgil would cut the
Throats of chickens (millions of
Them) as they swung past him
Hanging from the conveyor belt
That snaked through the factory like a giant
Clanking runway. The chickens with
Wings a-flapping and their squawks
Of terror adding to the cacop
Hony of machinery made them
Appear to be engaged in some
Wild pagan dance ritual,
Dancing up to him full of life
To the fevered pitch of
This weird metallic music thumping
And rattling and reverberating with
Their cries on this crimson dance floor

Somewhere in time Virgil's dance card
Finally filled up and he could no longer
Dispatch any more souls
Chicken or otherwise
In the name of Tyson.

But in the wee wee
Hours when sleep
Comes haltingly and
Nightmares interweave
With the waking world
As the chickens begin their dance
His hand forms (as if by instinct)
That Caesarian position

It never gives the 'Live' sign.

*Raindog
San Pedro, CA*



Working In The Crematorium

It is a simple life.
Check the flame,
Check the fuel,
Put the body in
And let it cook
To ash,
Then turn off
The fire,
Sweep out
The white powder
And maybe a tooth,
Empty the dustpan
Into an urn.
It's a day's pay,

And makes your conscience
Rest easier,
Robbed of
Any fear of hell.
Good, bad, indifferent
All ending in flames.
The beer after work
Is cold
And goes down fine
While eyes study
The dancers
Before opening
Your wallet
For a five.

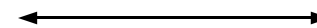
*Joseph Farley
Philadelphia, PA*

through the window at 2 a.m.

Last night, you went to the window.
Last night, something drew
you from the bed, lured you
into the living room, pressed
your palms against the back of
the sofa and urged your fingers
to separate the blinds. Last night
you watched her come home. You
watched her anonymous lover
park his pick-up three houses
up the street, watched her linger
there long enough to let your
imagination stray into dark
territory, watched the door
swing wide with sudden bravado,
watched high-heels sink
into dew-moist St. Augustine
grass.

Last night, the margaritas
tricked her into feeling stealthy.
Last night, she didn't feel your
eyes upon her as she curb-skirted
her way home to the house across
the street. Last night, you felt sorry
for her husband. Last night, you
remembered feeling sorry for yourself.

*Lee Clark Zumpe
Largo, FL*



SILVANA, I SAID,

“You're in a pickle.”

“Yeah I know, she answered,
but I've gotten used to
living in brine.” *Chocolate Waters
New York, NY*