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FIREWEED

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Alice Hardesty

FIRST SNOW

At the trailhead light rain turns to snow.
We walk on a bed of rust-colored needles,
pine-cone remains exploded into tiny fans
orange, tinged with burnt umber.
Everywhere, the scent of musty cedar,
damp earth. Unprepared, a chipmunk dashes
across the trail toward shelter.

My brother labors in the thin air,
four years after bypass surgery,
perhaps we should turn back.
But the forest draws us on.
Douglas firs push skyward,
clouds of white settling
in their topmost branches.
Snow swirls up the mountainside
like the reckless flurries
in a child's Christmas ball.

All is quiet except the squeak
of boots on fresh snow
and a finch's hurried declaration
before flying home.

Anka triples our distance
chasing sticks, snooping into holes
checking on us, her pack.

We humans, in our efforting,
cannot talk, only climb
and wonder amid the whirling snow.

Will we make it to the end?
How many more first snows
will sweep up the mountain?
Will there be another dog after this one?
How many miles are left to walk?

Robert Cohen

A WINTER'S TALE

I bring the silence of the dark...

James Laughlin

I lie worried in a warm bed
and listen to the ghosts of winters past.

Is it you calling?
No, it's only snow falling.

Robert Cohen

ONE MORNING

*[P]ulling you to me and touching for an instant
your sweet little breast, an impulse of courage.*

James Laughlin

She doesn't know that I touched
her breast for an instant with intent
as we sat down to breakfast that morning.

But who do I fool? Of course she knew
whatever she needed or wanted to know
about me and my foolish manner
and my hope.

IN LONG SUPPLY

For the object of desire,
consider the inexhaustible
purse, the well without a word
for dry, an eight lying
on its side to take
a delectable Vishnu nap –
consider only what comes
in infinite supply.

Dream the world alive
without those two sets of hands
both intent on gaining
a single prize. Dream the hands,
by all means do,
but dream into being prizes
beyond number. No ante, no trump.
No winner take all
when the prize can be
a be-all with no end.

Confound the maker of odds
by wanting what's common enough
to have no limit: the little twigs
of coincidence, the grit of joy
under your feet, words
that trail from your lips
like haphazard banners in the wind.

MIRROR OF THESE EYES

Turn the quicksilvered glass
against a wall. Shut the oval
of burnished brass deep in a drawer.
Turn your back to picture windows,
to pools of water, smooth and clear.
Make your mirror from my eyes.

What can reflection tell you
but lies? How could light
bent away from what it seeks
give anything back but doubt
and sighs? Make of my eyes your
only mirror, mirror in these eyes.

Let these portals to my heart
show you truth much deeper
than any glass could recognize.
Look at me and see what I see
While I look at you: myself
loved in a lover's eyes.

James Grabill

FROM THE COMPASS OF WHEREWITHALL

When the drummers stop and then slowly start,
the road knows the way it was built.
It knows the people who drove the paving trucks.
It knows the crossroads that are implied.

A woman never loves with only one flower.
A woman never drives without a round wheel.
A chant never goes in a straight line,
and neither does any animal for long.

Neighbors water their tomatoes like angels
bees are close to, like patients who do
some doctoring, like grandfathers of themselves
puffing tobacco and listening to Neil Young.

The scent of oil on pavement is a comfort
for some, though it's hard to explain.
Light becomes a bridge and substance.
Every bridge sways slightly over time.

Blossoming squash say the time is right.
A man never loves with only one song.
Mastodons slowly graze through the past
of some of the wind still getting here.

The ground is a bed where so many have slept
that grass softens as worms soften the clay.
A hungry baby cries out as the rain falls.
Light becomes the ways it is making us.

Where is the road going? It already knows
its direction. When we walk, we know a richness,
a charge, however subtle, of being able to walk.
Each step is a reward, a bridge. Is that it?

We walk, sometimes above the business,
sometimes a part of each other's lives.
A plant never loves only with its green body.
Suffering is only one way the wheel turns.

James Grabill

A NUCLEAR PRESENTATION

Turning back from the accelerator,
Carl saw the neighborhood vibrating,
a floating current of waves on an ocean,

a water from the beginnings of names,
a blue from the way walls are hammered
into place from bearings elapsed

out of spherical arcs of cosmic shape.
So all this was in a wave chamber,
as if someone had started it,

as if an experiment were forgetting
where the rooms kept apart for good.
Nearby, a woman returned home

with groceries she slowly put onto shelves
as if she were taking apart a sense
of the whole, as if her hands were

pinecones of trees trying to understand
what humans want. Another neighbor
was moving plants in her wild yard.

She seemed content that the plants
all hovered above the ground
they would soon be placed in.

She seemed content that the hour
hovered above its ground that flowed
with the river of seeing a part of it.

The ocean of that river constantly
moved forward and back through
its body of sun and sun taken away

and flesh light and rhubarb light
and grass light and goldfinch light.
What happens when light from the source

of the day reaches a being or presence?
You have some of the earth
listening and some of the cosmos

listening, and you have so much off
in hunger and completion, in this
single time, that you have to listen.

Gary Adams

OSCILLATIONS

Intervals of daylight between raindrops

intervals of winter bisect summer

intervals of you inside me

we are always in
a week, a month, a year
a now, an interval between ticks

and the heart goes beat – silence – beat
and a rock tossed in a pond throws ripples.

I lifted my hand above my face
and spread my fingers
in between my fingers was night.

Jim Thielen

SHE SMELLS OF THE VINE

The girl who works in
the produce department at Safeway
told me she lives on a farm.

I watch her spray round lettuce heads,
arrange green apples in pyramid piles
beside the pink-fleshed grapefruit;

she looks scrubbed and clean
as the baker potatoes
she sells for forty-nine cents a pound

but I know she's not afraid
to kneel in the dirt,
and I wonder

if I could ask her to bring me
just one ripe red tomato
from her garden.

Sara Backer

DON'T LOVE IT TOO MUCH

That maple tree
with peach and yellow leaves glowing
against storm clouds – don't get attached.
Those leaves are going down. They'll collapse
in a heap around the trunk
like a child's ballet costume, all at once: bam!
It's over.
The next act isn't pretty.
Stuck in the rinse cycle,
not coming clean for months on end.
It's mud, mud, mud, mud
whirled.

Sara Backer

SEEING THE LIGHT AT 2 A.M.

At 29th & Circle,
the energetic traffic signal
flashes an exact pulse.
Red reflects on wet asphalt
in four empty directions.
I stop for it –

this beacon of faith,
a monument to order
when people are gone.

HAPPINESS

The way the garden shines
through the fence slats as you pass,
the way the big moon rises
with an edge in shadow,
you see that once there was happiness.
This is the way to call it back:
Come back! Come back right away!
I am giving up neatness for you.

There is a back porch where a lonely being
faces loops of stars. Remember stars
stare back. Stars are like milk,
good for a bone, good for the teeth,
you must remember. There is a smoky room;
the tank of fish and the proletarian
smile out of the window at the Little Dipper,
getting it wrong again.

Happiness is a thread to find,
in flowers simple in the carpet,
scrolled and midnight blue.
Happiness is one lucky clover
in a hundred fields. I was afraid
when I knew who searched the fields
from the age of ten. I was afraid
when I saw the horses grazing.
But happiness
has no better argument than courage.
And my breath was decisive, passing in
and out.

Then She the Searcher parted the grass,
saw the snake whip away with a tale of her.

From *Bad Boats* (Ecco Press, 1977).

In the early 1970s I studied poetry as an undergraduate at the University of Iowa. One afternoon, walking home skimming purloined grad student worksheets, I stumbled on a poem about a crow that ended with the following lines:

*I pounded something with a stone.
Sometimes I think it was my heart.
Sometimes I think it was a stranger's heart,
someone now I will never know.*

(“The Crow Is Mischief,” *Bad Boats*)

~

I stopped where I stood, lit up by the primal energy of these words. Suddenly, animal lives and forces unseen became more real to me than the linear world on which I habitually depended – they came as alive as they had always been. In the eerily charged landscape of the poem, I felt dislocated and safe at home.

Thus, my adventures as a poem thief introduced me to the uncanny voice of Laura Jensen. I kept an eye out for more of her poems on worksheets, and heard that Jensen, a native of the Pacific Northwest, was blown away by Iowa winter's spectral frigidity: “The snow came, / boxing the houses like jewelry in cotton.” (“Poem,” *Memory*, 1982)

There was a Workshop student party, frost-flowers etched on windowpanes. Three women sandwiched on a couch, the woman in the middle leaning back silently. Words, stories and ideas flew, while she appeared separate from it all, as if she were not actively withdrawing from the party, but existed on another plane. She was there, but not there. She exuded a sense of fragility and self-sufficiency. I wanted to speak to her, but it seemed out of the question, an intrusion. Laura Jensen appeared to have one foot firmly planted in a universe I wanted to get to know.

Jensen's voice quickly came into its own: within a few short years the MFA student became a nationally acclaimed poet, pub-

lishing three full-length books in fairly rapid succession: *Bad Boats* (1977, Ecco Press), *Memory* (1982, Dragon Gate), and *Shelter* (1985, Dragon Gate).

For some two decades, her poetic universe has continued to arouse, baffle, comfort, alarm, amuse and astonish me. She moves about freely from one vivid, dreamlike image to another, making sudden shifts in tone, often recasting the world within a poem. There are shifts in tense and point of view, without linear explanation, yet it makes sense and is strangely compelling. She offers marvelous moments - "The way the garden shines/through the fence slats as you pass" - and just as keen an awareness of harm before it becomes apparent. Her familiar world is the natural one, close to home, earth and sky, full of awe and lucid dreams. The ultimate mystery is selfhood, "She the Searcher" here. In language both delicious and direct, Jensen evokes evanescent states and invites us into the private, buzzing garden of a wild imagination.

Tess Gallagher call her "the Einstein of the ordinary." Norman Dubie places her "among the true heirs to the work of Dickinson, Frost and Bishop." Mark Strand says, "I know of no other young poet who takes the risks that Laura Jensen does or who succeeds in so remarkable a way."

To read a book by Jensen is to have a series of fresh encounters with the numinous. Unfortunately, copies are hard to find. *Memory* and *Shelter* can still be ordered from the publisher, according to a worker at Looking Glass Books in Portland. However, I rarely see copies anywhere; if so, they are used ones. In an era of glitz and mergers, I don't want Jensen's enigmatic, lyrical voice to slide underground. She could be the Dickinson of her generation. We in the relatively balmy Northwest are fortunate to have her living in our midst.

Thus, I had no trouble deciding which poet to spotlight here. The difficulty was in picking just one of her quirky, luminous poems to share. I chose "Happiness" because the first verse chants in my mind, and the poem's lithe resistance to closure is typical of her work. The poem delivers on its premise, giving up tidy resolution for a surprise ending that whips around in the two final lines to nip the reader on the ankle: Hey look, here's another angle. Happiness is elusive, like the poem itself. The membrane between this world and others is thinner than one thinks.

Sarah Larson

BEFORE KISSING

We sit in the evening and eat half-globes
of tomatoes with salt.
It is August. We taste stars in this
white wine, talk about
the scent of damp trees, divine
the color of cars before
they roll by. No talk of July,
no talk of September. Quietly I
pass you the knife, you pass me the tender
red tomato. We consider
the simple fruit in our mouths,
these heavily seeded, endless chambers.

Susan Domagalski

ESTATE SALE

Mr. Givens will never see
the signs tacked to the power pole
at 31st and Rex, his sons
in the cold, gold living room
making change, neighbors
he has never met
fingering his Christmas tree
ornaments. He won't know
the couple in tennis shoes leaving
coffee cups on his sideboard
while they weigh his wife's Fostoria.
He won't see the price tags
dangling from his flannel bathrobe,
vinyl slippers, red and blue striped belt
worn thin at the third hole. He won't feel
the growing heat of the kitchen
as the bodies swarm around his zester,
juicer, grater, tart pan, trash can,
half-used roll of aluminum foil,
stainless steel tea kettle
sitting on the stove
still filled with water.

Susan Domagalski

WORKPLACE

I can't say exactly
what the trouble was,
why some said
they read our email,
recorded our phone calls,
snooped through the recycling.

One lady swore
the restrooms were bugged.

I really can't say.

Now I work at home,
in a room off the attic, with a view
of my neighbor's roof
and the robin
who is perched there
each morning
at eight o'clock sharp.

Anita T. Sullivan

DISSIPATION

You took off your glasses
as we were standing by
the dining room table
(your keys
had already fallen down behind the piano).

You kissed me
and
my head rose smiling
to lodge firmly above the
ceiling fan.

After that, I removed your ears
and put them carefully into the fruit bowl
on top of the apples.

You, meanwhile
were unscrewing my knee-caps.

I told you to forget the toes
(since they would fall off of their
own accord, later).

“If we lived every day like we would die tomorrow –”
out of the blue, I asked you,
“Or if we lived every day like we would live forever?
Would there be
any difference?”

“No difference, when I'm with you,”
you said, no hesitation.
And then we lost our mouths.

Anita T. Sullivan

MAMA TALKING TO TIMMY ABOUT STORY

Look, it's true what you say
configurations *are* random, anywhere
you look, a whole mountain
or just a kitchen wall.

But I guaran-damn-tee you, Timmy
give me any three things – whatever –
out of that “blue” of which you speak
ideas, patterns, objects,
and I can turn them into a story.
So can you. It's duck soup.
Our cells plot for a living
they spew plot, they dream story
they do not sleep nor do we, really.

Start with this table (see what
I mean) the coffee cup hitting the top
mid-section of your right eyeball
with more pressure than the butter dish
which slides eelishly off about the angle
of yesterday.

And the table rolling its grain out
towards your chest, a mere
shotgun blast, no need to run
could be a river seen from an airplane
going against the current –
Oh, it dizzies me!

The salt shaker, now, a tower sinister
maybe one of those Albanian bunkers
around which swirls the feud of blood,
the cold road where fog has a real job
to do, is squeezed out of a tube
by a god who gets paid big bucks,

how small we would be to climb
its glass hill with our horses!

Erik Muller

GLASSES RAISED IN THE OLD MANNER

(for Dave Laing)

Today, Wendling Road. Remember
stopping there thirty years ago?
The cabin deserted even then,
coils of blackberry pressing in,
the siding slipped and blackened?
We thought we could live there,
so did all the talking when the farmer
who owned the field came out to check on us.

We never hurried that September,
full and gold. We rattled
along back roads, stopped
like Thoreau to taste the apples,
inhaled pungent stubble.

Even then the cabin's lumber
could not withstand the blows
from hammers or the bite of nails.
The invalid porch still stumbles.
The tin roof keeps rain
from eating at the heart.

That summer we found our place,
a novelty to drive a truck,
heat with wood, turn the ground
for planting in the spring.
As always it must have rained
but I remember *dry* and *warm*.

Let's drink to it, even if we pour
fooling after fooling. Let good
beer slide through the gates.
Tiny bubbles spark,

then darken in the sudden
taste of it: fields, punk
windowsills, nailheads
leaking rust, thirty years,
places we lived and never lived!

David Axelrod

OF TWO MINDS ABOUT IT

Waiting up for you last night,
paced back and forth to the gate,

listened for your horse in the lane,
and left all my housework undone.

And now you've arrived, late,
your hands groping inside my shirt,

coaxing me with kisses, but love,
there's yesterday's work as well.

after an anonymous 5th c. poem

David Axelrod

TENURE

1

So, how much longer have I got?

2

All my life,
I desired long life
for my privileged friends,
all of whom vanished before me
nevertheless, simple as the rain
soaks into grass after long drought.

3

Years ago,
a child appeared
in this prefecture, for whom
my dying sooner, rather than later
would have made a little more room,
an extra bowl of rice, perhaps an easier life.

4

Excuse me, would you know the time?

after Jien

Lois Rosen

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Pilar, a young *señora*, floats
into the classroom, her hair
to the middle of her back
wavy and loose. She writes
*I am colibri, the hummingbird,
radiant feathers, vibrating wings.*

Javier considers *a teacher
an opal shining in the darkness.*
After working late,
he gets up at five a.m.
to make *mole*
for our 8:30 class.

Evelia, such *elegancia*,
wears strapless black velvet
in our class movie
"The Red High Heels"
in which Javier stars, so
we call him "Prince Javier."

Evelia admires poets,
looking at
*each little stone,
each star.*
My job is to unlock
this classroom,

plug in the coffeepot
write *Good morning,
wonderful students,*
on the blackboard
(actually maroon),
turn on some wake up music

*I feel good na na na na na na na
I knew that I would na na na na na na na*

welcome Javier, Evelia, Pilar,
the whole class
and ever since our movie
when I say, *How are you?*
they repeat Evelia's line:
Ab so lute ly perfect!

Lois Rosen

PETER CHEUNG

I thought of you today
as ten thousand Chinese troops
stand ready to enter Hong Kong
and images of Tiananmen Square
and the tanks keep coming
while a woman on the radio says,
Where would I go?
Hong Kong is my home.

In our class movie you were king,
and the jewelled crown suited you.
You entertained us with Chinese songs
about the beauty of the plum,
the double peach for long life,
a scrolled poem in ideograph.
Decay will be gradual,
a reporter guesses.
American businesses
have investments.

You lead us in Tai Chi,
an elegance of limb
physical peace in this world
where our kids play Nintendo.
You sit with your arm around
Khou Nguyen and help him
like a father with each letter
your grammar impeccable
your accent thick with Kowloon.
You bow to me.
I bow to you.

Pat Vivian

CRUISING THE LOOP

When we were living poor together
in that tall-windowed Lovejoy room,
we used to cruise the Loop, a cheap date
on Friday night – hop in the Toy and fly
above the wrinkled Willamette,
feel the wind tease the small red car.

Speed ahead through core Portland,
a flat stretch until the Marquam Bridge
south of town like a mezzanine
swoops around the jazzy cityshine
sparkling the river's reflection.
Of course, it was fleeting:

a few hurtling seconds and we'd drop,
freeway-trenched, headed north again
past eyeless husks of warehouses
until the soaring Fremont ramp
sucked us up
into the cycle one more time.

Sometimes we gazed out the window;
or slugged it out in campy lines
we knew by heart, love's sleaze; or froze
in queasy silence, love's ultimate refusal.
Anything but what was passing
between us.

THE YOUNG POET AND THE INVESTIGATORS

1. *His Gloves Are Black*

The hands of the young poet liquefy in his gloves –
like the hands of dead men, he imagines,
pleading in the waves.

The young poet lacks imagination.

2. *The Investigators*

The investigators broke down his door but they left the axe in
(once, he had written: “like a fat man
reposing on the center of time”), and it stayed there, even when his shin

slammed against it as they dragged him out kicking.

DOROTHY ON THE BRICKS, NEVER IN KANSAS
TO BEGIN WITH

Eyebrow raised in attitude at the table
she was arch, god knows, maybe Roman arch
perfectly curved, crucially balanced. Ah,
but she wasn't, was she? No, she was
a crypto-Jew, alcoholic, loved only men
though she wrote some real women, by god.
Horsie, Big Blonde, she did give us those
but she couldn't stop being so goddamn arch –
no triumph, only the two in her feet.

Not one of those men was heard by us
to openly long for a brain; not one ever said,
but now we know, that some hearts
were missing when the cards were read;
she had all the errant courage, knowing
a spade was a spade, excusing absent parts.
She worshipped the gods without prayer,
with bottled libation and words so sharp
they cut her right off at the knee.

I wrote the first one-stanza version of this poem when Dorothy Parker became, briefly, a literary growth stock, garnering her posthumous fifteen minutes of fame impersonated by Jennifer Jason Leigh and virtually simultaneously packaged in a documentary displayed on video store shelves as if it were a Hollywood glitz version of a really exciting gal, which, of course, she was but not entirely or precisely in the way they presented her.

I first read Parker when I was thirteen. As a freshman in high school in 1956, I read “The Waltz” in my *Short Story Reader*¹ – wherein it was offered as an example of stream-of-consciousness narration. Parker was one of only eight women represented in that

collection of 35 writers², but I did not notice this in 1956; nor did I notice those numbers or understand their meaning in 1964, when, as a new teacher of high school freshmen, I assigned "The Waltz" to my own students.

The story was one of a minority that had been given footnotes. Presaging the mood of E.D. Hirsch a few decades later, that editor wanted us to know about St. Walpurgis Night, the Jukes family, "The Fall of the House of Usher," and Mrs. O'Leary's cow. But he offered no information about Dorothy Parker, life and times. And, I now can say with hindsight, that was what I really needed.

Later, I read "Big Blonde," and then turned back to the beginning and immediately read it again. Could this be the same wise-cracker who gave me "The Waltz" and "You Were Perfectly Fine" and told me in sardonic rhyme that I might as well live? I was – as later generations whose language must have irritated her intensely would say – blown away. I was blown away by the mind and craft that could produce all that insight, those startlingly painful lives, that ear-perfect dialogue, blown away by finding what Grace Paley (bless her mind) still calls "truth" – so unfashionable, in stories that could have been no more than brittle exercises in sarcasm and cynicism.

Later still, when I had become a conscious feminist and learned more about her, reading *The Portable Parker* over again, I turned to the poetry – taking it seriously despite rhyme I had been taught to despise, taking in its power and recognizing one source of power as the (now) rare and strange combination of hard rhyme and hard mind. I was astonished to read what I'd thought of as funny jingles and to discover instead a writer's skill and depth.

I was politically pleased to find that she had, after all, a good woman friend, then sorry to find that her friend was the woman-negative Lillian Hellman. I was excited to learn that Parker had left her estate to the NAACP and was certain that Hellman, her executor, would take care of *that* business in a way both Dorothy and I would choose. But I was demanding – I wanted Dorothy Parker to sober up, I wanted her to write more stories like "Horsie," I wanted her to become a conscious woman in a second wave fashion. I even wanted her to be a real Jew, not just her 20th century *converso* father's daughter. I wanted (I see now) Dorothy

Parker to do what Adrienne Rich has done – become a radical feminist and a Jew in public. The fact that she was dead by the time I began to make these demands, and so could not comply, did not stop me.

She was elegant and witty; she was peevish and snotty. I aspired to the former qualities and abhorred the latter when they reared what I am certain she would have instantly recognized as their ugly heads in myself. She, who could write a scathing review of an audience of cultural poseurs and climbers at greater length than the play they'd all ostensibly come to see³, would have had more than a field day with today's culture wars.

I want to claim her even though she rejected a conscious politics of gender and certainly would have rejected my generation of radical feminists; surely the term "male-identified" could have been coined for her and her girlfriend Lillian. Her extraordinary ability to tell the truth about what her generation called "the battle of the sexes" did not liberate her.

But no matter how disappointed and irritated I am about what I read as her mistakes and shortcomings, I'm disgusted at the way she has been treated by the literary junta that disappeared her so speedily and powerfully – and that's why what began as a one-stanza poem of complaint and regret has evolved into a two-stanza poem of angry mourning.

I thought of using the movie version of Dorothy Gale as a counterpoint to Dorothy Parker for only my title at first, smiling with the sarcastic irony so much of Parker's work carries even as I typed the words. The god theme, however, welled up into the poem in a far less conscious way and surprised me, given my own godlessness. I saw that she had worshipped the wrong gods, and I understood that the narrator in this poem was seeing Parker in her final years as isolated and lonely, with no sustaining faith or belief, political or spiritual, and I was using a rather Parkerian sarcasm to portray her as broken and fallen, with these sad, ordinary metatarsal arches, instead of the grander structures suggested in the other two "arch" images.

Then, spurred by the idea of writing commentary on my own verse, and motivated by themes and images that grew more detailed when I created a second stanza, I added the comparison of the two Dorothys to the text of the poem. The more I read what

I had written, the more contrasting layers I saw: Dorothy Gale probably still holds the unofficial title of America's Sweetheart, thanks to the film's characterization and plot which obscure completely the novel's feminist purpose⁴; and the fact that those ruby slippers thrive on the amazing half-life of both video rental and recurrent holiday TV specials.

I saw then the outrageous life of the cherished Dorothy and the miserable life of Judy Garland, who played her. I thought about the fact that most adult viewers know all about this gulf. I noticed that the primary images in stanza two result from a juxtaposition of one set of meanings – the technicolor memory of a sweet, brave, make-believe girl who adopts three dopey but charming guys who acknowledge their weaknesses with poignance and memorable lyrics – upon another set of meanings: the intellectual reputation of an acerbic, tough, real woman who was adopted by a cohort of successful, famous male companions whose alcoholism and emotional disability were publicly acknowledged as a source of witty conversation and cultural commentary

When the second stanza opened for me, I took up the suggestion of locomotion in the “feet” of stanza one; that ultimately gave me the “knee” image of stanza two, as well as the yellow brick road itself, which I emphasized by lengthening my original title⁵; the new title goes beyond simply bringing the two Dorothys together by suggesting Parker's defeat with its similarity (and allusion) to “on the ropes.” I discovered, too, that I had used a bit of internal rhyme, so I worked to compound it, adding some end rhyme to make it all more obvious, in homage to Parker.

And as I did these things, I began to see her differently; I understand now that I have gradually changed the focus of the poem to alter the attitude and shift the point of view of the narrator, to offer a more complex view of Parker's degradation. Though my Dorothy Parker clearly accepts responsibility for the choices and the trajectory of her life, the gods she worshipped, self-absorbed as Zeus, are revealed to be a primary source of her downfall.

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1. *The Short Story Reader*, Ed. Rodney A. Kimball, Odyssey Press, New York, 1946.

2. In a list called Famous Short Stories of the World, located at the very end of the collection, the editor actually included nine women (most of whom were the usual suspects for that era; Sigrid Undset, Katherine Mansfield, Shirley Jackson, *et al*) in a list of more than eighty authors.

3. Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband* (in *The Portable Dorothy Parker*, 1973 pb edition).

4. L. Frank Baum, the son of a suffragist mother, explained that his Dorothy was created so that girls could have a young female hero. The plot of the book differs in several ways from the film made of *The Wizard of Oz*, most notably in that Dorothy's adventures in the book are *real*; they are not a dream, as they are made to be in the movie.

5. ...changing it from “Dorothy, never in Kansas to begin with.”

EDITORS' NOTES

For those looking for refreshment in the area of craft, we recommend two books by renowned poets that appeared in 1998, *The Sounds of Poetry* (Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux) by our current Poet Laureate, Robert Pinsky, and *Making Your Own Days* (Scribner) by Kenneth Koch, the original Poet-in-the-Schools master. Pinsky himself says that the first two chapters of his short book are the most important. Chapter I explains and discusses accent and duration; Chapter II deals with syntax and line. Anyone with questions in these areas would do well to check out these chapters (the rest of the book is good too!).

In his book, Kenneth Koch takes a more general look at reading and writing poetry. He discusses the language of poetry at some length and then moves on to writing and reading it. In Part Three of *Making Your Own Days*, Koch has gathered an anthology of nearly two hundred pages of poems and supplied each poem with a thoughtful brief commentary.

Portland listeners enjoyed hearing former *Fireweed* editor Erik Muller read at the Mark Woolly Gallery as part of 26 Books publisher Dan Raphael's series of readings by authors in his new anthology *Playing with a Full Deck*.

Fireweed has recently had the good fortune to receive a grant from the Wyss Family Foundation that will greatly aid in meeting our publication costs for the near future. We thank the Foundation very much for this generous support of poetry in Western Oregon.

members.xoom.com/fireweedmag is our Web site address. Check it out.

CONTRIBUTOR'S NOTES

GARY ADAMS is a hiker who does landscape work in Eugene. He entertained picnickers with some of his poems at the last *Fireweed* gathering in Willamette Park.

JUDITH ARCANA's work is forthcoming in *ZYZZYVA*, 13th Moon and the Cleis Press anthology *Nice Jewish Erotica*; other work has appeared recently in *Fireweed*, *Nimrod: International Journal*, and *CALYX*.

DAVID AXELROD is the author of one collection of poems, *Jerusalem of Grass* (Ahsahta), and a limited-edition chapbook of a long poem, *The Kingdom at Hand* (Ice River). His poems have appeared in numerous journals and three recent anthologies. He is a co-editor of *Calapooya Collage*.

SARA BACKER, Corvallis, won a Djerassi artist's residency for the fall of 1999. Her poems have appeared in many literary journals and will show up this year in *Japanophile*, *Seattle Review* and *The Bear Deluxe*. This is her first appearance in *Fireweed*.

ROBERT COHEN Portland, a transplanted Chicagoan, has had poems in *Portland Review*, *Painted Hills Review* and *Portlander*. At last report, he had a manuscript ready to publish.

SUSAN DOMAGALSKI is a freelance writer living in Southeast Portland.

JAMES GRABILL is the author of *The Poem Rising Out of the Earth and Standing Up in Someone* (Lynx House Press, 1994), *Through the Green Fire* (Holy Cow, 1995), and *Listening to the Leaves Form* (Lynx House Press, 1997), among other volumes. He resides, writes and teaches in Portland.

ALICE HARDESTY lives and writes in Ashland. She has had work in *Westwind Review*, *Manzanita Quarterly* and *Rogue's Gallery*. Sometime this spring, one of her poems will appear in the *Jefferson Monthly*.

SARAH LARSON recently finished coursework for a B.A. in Spanish and International Studies at the University of Oregon. She hopes to travel and work with community development in the Northwest.

S. ALAN MCCRAE is a student at Chemeketa Community College who says that beyond this fact, his life is "of little biographical interest."

ERIK MULLER teaches part-time at Lane Community College. Boise State University just published his essay on Vern Rutsala in its Western Writers Series.

PAULANN PETERSEN, Portland, author of *The Animal Bride*, has published often regionally and nationally. She has work forthcoming in *Poetry* and *Prairie Schooner*.

LOIS ROSEN'S work has appeared in *Willow Springs* and *Hubbub*, among other venues. Lois workshopped with Galway Kinnell in New York last year. She lives and teaches in Salem.

ANITA SULLIVAN, Corvallis, is the author of *I Hear the Crickets Laughing*.

JAMES THIELEN, a native Oregonian, lives in retirement in Seal Rock.

PAT VIVIAN is a freelance technical writer/editor living in Portland. She has had poems in *Twelve Oregon Poets*, *Talus and Scree*, and other literary publications.

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