



The Road Not Taken
A Journal of Formal Poetry

Spring 2017

The Road Not Taken: A Journal of Formal Poetry

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Poet's Corner

Welcome to the Spring 2017 Issue of *The Road Not Taken: A Journal of Formal Poetry*.

This spring we have decided to experiment with a themed section, with the theme being a variant on the season, **Life in Dried Tubers**. We have tried to arrange the themed poems so as to begin with that moment of winter when it seems never to end, and then take us progressively from early spring all the way through full celebration. It's always a question of course where to draw the lines: we considered for instance putting Robert Beveridge's *The Balcony* and Peter Branson's *Wakes Night Fair* at the end of this section, to suggest the human manifestation of all that new-sprouted life. In the end however we decided to define the theme more narrowly, this time.

Re **Life in Dried Tubers**: yes, that is a fragment taken Eliot's *The Wasteland*, one of the most influential Modernist poems of the twentieth century. And yes, this journal is dedicated to metrical and/or rhymed poetry. The irony has not escaped us. The current editors of *Road* however reject the bifurcation of metrical vs. modern poetry; these are not armed camps that readers or writers must choose between. In fact, most of the metrical poets we know write not only in both modes, but a variety in between.

The Road Not Taken exists because there is a need today for outlets that specialize in metrical and rhymed poetry, and we have no intention of abandoning that mission. The fact remains however that many of the lines in *The Wasteland* were written in blank verse – and the deliberate violation of formal expectations is responsible for many of the most effective “free” verse.

Kathryn Jacobs
Managing Editor

Rachel Jacobs
Associate Editor

Contents

John Davis
Gregory Palmerino

Day Five
Big Bang Theory

Feature Poem
Editor's Pick

Theme: Life in Dried Tubers

C.B. Anderson
Martin Elster
Brian Gavin
Dana Sonnenschein
R. Yurman
Edward Ahern

Surviving Winter
Reservoir # 6
The Work of Trees
Seattle Center
Squirrel in the Attic
At the Cottage

Spring 2017

R Yurman
John Davis

Robert Beveridge
Peter Branson
Louis Hunt
Gregory Palmerino
Yates Young
Emily Bowles
Diana Moomey
Craig Kurtz
A. C. Pavis
Jean L. Kreiling
Kristen Hendricks
Beth Houston
Drew Marshall

Pain Sonnet
Bus Stop
Picking Blackberries
The Balcony
Wakes Night Fair
Ink
Memoirs
The Funeral of Stephen Crane
The World in my Daughter's Earrings
Epiphany
The Problem with Love Poetry
The Flirt
“Furiant”
Oracle
Femme Fatale
The City That Never Weeps

Feature Poem

John Davis

John Davis is the author of *Gigs* and *The Reservist*. His work has appeared in *Cutbank*, *DMQ Review*, *Iron Horse Literary Review*, *One* and *Rio Grande Review*. He lives on an island west of Seattle, teaches writing and performs in blues bands.

Day Five

With picket signs on slumped shoulders, we walk
around the school where I have taught for half
a life, nosing into *Black Boy*, John Locke,
correcting sentence fragments, paragraphs.
Inside my classroom a white board waits
like a silent mistress in a laced gown;
the ghosts of student voices, due dates,
thick textbooks—all are silent in a sit down.
Gone are strike songs, rallies, doughnuts, leaflets.
Now is the need for sun block, sturdy shoes.
We count up the loss of wages, make bets
for the settlement while a teacher with toes
through her shoes, crosses. We do not blame
her for stopping but remember her name.

Editor's Choice
(Rachel Jacobs)

Gregory Palmerino

Gregory Palmerino teaches English at Manchester Community College. His poetry and essays have been published in several print and online journals, including *The Road Not Taken*. His most recent work can be found at *Autumn Sky Daily* and *Ekphrastic Review*. He writes poetry in Connecticut's Quiet Corner, where he lives with his wife and three children.

Big Bang Theory

One solitary shadow, singular
in thought and recognition, lost from none
(the real or the unreal) still unaware
if one exists in part or whole, if one
is love—and if love, being love—shattered
into infinity, leaving darkness
with light (our midnight lanterns) fragments fled
in ecstasy, expanding in blindness.

In the midst of it all, between the night
and day, fire and ice, a forlorn island
that basks in finite tails of white starlight,
(spiraling like crystallized grains of sand
through an eternal hourglass), longs to know
the source of this still ubiquitous glow.

Theme:
Life in Dried Tubers

C. B. Anderson

C.B. Anderson was the longtime gardener for the PBS television series, *The Victory Garden*. Hundreds of his poems have appeared in scores of print and electronic journals out of North America, Australia, Great Britain, Ireland, Austria and India. His poetry collection, *Mortal Soup and the Blue Yonder* was published in 2013 by White Violet Press.

Surviving Winter

There's little anyone can do about
The weather but to don the proper gear,
And those whose inclination is to flout
Convention might not make it through the year.

As Grandma warned, wet feet can cause pneumonia,
And if it happens that you wind up sick,
The medical professionals will own ya—
They'll send you straight to bed, and make it stick.

But if you're lucky, snow will swamp your hovel,
Providing you with healthful exercise
When you remove it with a plastic shovel—
Unless the wintry mess solidifies.

In *that* case you will need a hefty ice-pick
To render frozen water into shards
More easily disposed of. It's a nice trick,
Relieving driveways, clearing glacial yards,

Of winter's virulent precipitation.
Another avenue, by which we may withdraw,
Is through deliberate procrastination:
We step aside, and wait for April's thaw.

Martin Elster

Martin Elster's poetry has appeared in numerous literary journals and anthologies, including *Astropoetica*, *Autumn Sky Poetry Daily*, *Cahoodaloodaling*, *The Flea*, *Eye to the Telescope*, and in the anthologies *Taking Turns: Sonnets from Eratosphere*, The 2012 and 2015 Rhysling Anthologies, *New Sun Rising: Stories for Japan*, *Eccentric Press Poetry Anthology (Volume I)*, and *Poems for a Liminal Age*. Recent honors include co-winner of Rhymezone's 2016 poetry contest, first place in the Thomas Gray Anniversary Poetry Competition 2014, third place in the Science Fiction Poetry Association's 2015 poetry contest, and two Pushcart nominations.

Reservoir No. 6

Geese dawdle near the melting ice
while gulls, like white confetti,
wheel before a mount of mist:
they sense the sun is ready
to muscle through the pall of clouds
whose drops have drummed as steady

across these hills as ocean waves
have clawed the cliffs, as streams
have swelled, and wind has gnawed the world.
They've washed away the dreams
of tadpoles, catfish, carp, and trout
which flash their glitter-gleams.

Defrosted frogs in fevered fervor
quack and trill and whistle,
fawns tail their leaders through the cedars,
blinking at bears that bristle,
while hairy caterpillars hatch
on hickory and thistle.

This must be why I scaled the fence,
slogging along a track
of rills and muddy puddles; why
each sneaker is a sack
of sopping wilderness; and why
each spring I will be back.

Brian Gavin

Brian Gavin is a retired newspaperman and lover of poetry. He lives with his wife Karen in Lakeport Michigan.

The Work of Trees

Things, like people, in the business of decay
depend on trees. Within this latticed dusk
the tired old pretensions fall away
like flecks of paint from off the shrouded husk
of clapboard, and green stones spilling from a fence.
The house leans forward now, nails soft with rust ---
it is the way an aged woman bends
forward in prayer, shapeless in shawl. There must
be trees beneath which things grow ripe and rot,
to be again with other things, in dreams ---
old women at mass, men at bars, forgotten
things, distilled of story. Underneath the beams
the brush softens, and change is by degrees
of lessening — it is the work of trees.

Dana Sonnenschein

Dana Sonnenschein is a professor at Southern Connecticut State University where she teaches Shakespeare, folklore, and creative writing. Her publications include creative nonfiction and books of poetry (*Bear Country* and *Natural Forms*) as well as two chapbooks of prose poems (*Corvus* and *No Angels but These*). Individual poems have appeared in journals such as *Epoch* and *Feminist Studies*, and are forthcoming in *Painted Bride Quarterly*, *Measure*, and elsewhere.

Seattle Center

Spring draws the heavy drapery
of cold rain back, so we take a walk
beyond glass flowers, molten stalks,
petals like hands raised to the sky.

The path leads to a cement crater
and brassy asteroid with dents.
No sign of coffee. Sighing, we sit
hunched on the rim and shiver

at this monument to desolation.
The Space Needle looks like saucers
stacked on a stick. So when water
and sound plume from perforations

in the ground, we jump and laugh, then stay.
Wind catches at the synchrony,
breaking up the symphony,
splattering pale cement with spray,

and I remember flying in, the Sound
all blue and the land green and tawny
like painted salt and flour clay.
We've stumbled onto childhood's end,

the relic of a civilization young
enough to send a music box
beyond our galaxy—pop vox,
sunburst man, and directions home.

I hunch into my coat. Someday
an eye not ours will look down
coldly at needle, pincushion,
and all this patched and holy place.

R. Yurman

R. Yurman retired after 32 years of teaching algebra and poetry. In the years since, he has stopped balancing his check book but gone on making poems. Today, nearing 80, he shares with 9 year old grandson Jacob the love of music and words. Together they forge circles of light amidst the sea of darkness around us.

Squirrel in the Attic

Chunks of cotton-candy pink fiberglass
litter the deck—he's racing up a branch
to the swaying narrow tree tip, leaping
to the eave, then overhead I hear the scrambling

Next morning, yanked awake by the scrape and shriek
of branches dragged through a narrow hole
barely 5 a.m.—I pull myself from bed
grab a broom, tap the ceiling—he pauses
starts again, I bang harder. *Silence*

He's hanging upside down outside the window
For a startling moment we're eye to eye

I'm no real threat. he slips back inside to work
on his nest 'til my determined ceiling
tapping drives him back outside and I return
to bed—from his safe tree he barks and screeches

He'll not give up his building—I give up on sleep.

Edward Ahern

Ed Ahern resumed writing after forty odd years in foreign intelligence and international sales. He's had a hundred and forty stories and poems published so far. His collected fairy and folk tales, *The Witch Made Me Do It* was published by Gypsy Shadow Press. His novella *The Witches' Bane* was published by World Castle Publishing, and his collected fantasy and horror stories, *Capricious Visions* was published by Gnome on Pig Press. Ed's currently working on a paranormal/thriller novel tentatively titled *The Rule of Chaos*. He works the other side of writing at Bewildering Stories, where he sits on the review board and manages a posse of five review editors.

At the Cottage

There was no measure of the day at the cottage.
Water rustled over glacier rocks along the shore
The sound soft or loud at the whim of the waves
The rhythm slower with bigger swells from the lake
The iron water glistening the multicolored stones
That our pausing to admire drew mosquitoes.

The rent we paid was the blood we gave to mosquitoes
So we could see gray-painted dusk at the cottage
With blues and greens wiped from the face of the lake.
The forest kept its silence so the waves
Could play the instruments along the shore
And let us hear the personalities of the stones.

Some made from death, some made from fire, the stones
Sheltered life but turned away mosquitoes
Who could not breed in moving water at the cottage.
And were driven into the forest by the waves
That protected only their own within the lake.
And guarded against the land along the shore.

The trees tendrilled close to ice outs along the shore
And root cuddled until they could split the stones
And give the water pockets to the mosquitoes
The woods bunched thick behind the cottage
Dead fall and live growth muffling the sound of waves
And spurning any memory of lake.

As cold June nights wedded the chills of the lake.
The unseen sounds came closer from along the shore
And from the woods the hidden hum of mosquitoes
Was static in the music of the stones
That shifted and played in front of the cottage
In time with the dulcet beating of the waves.

Even in pauses of calm, tiny waves

Snuck outward from a wave-less lake
And pattered like ferret feet along the shore.
And stirring in their sleep, the stones
Made less noise than the windless mosquitoes.
Who feasted on us at the cottage.

Stones still creep from depth to decorate the shore
And waves write memoirs about the moody lake
And children of my mosquitoes wait for me at the cottage.

**Spring
2017**

R. Yurman

Pain Sonnet

*Pain comes from darkness
And we call it wisdom. It is pain.*

—Randall Jarrell

They botched pulling one of your wisdom teeth,
left a fragment behind to rot in the bone.
Now surgery must undo that damage,
a graft that heals too slowly, so you feel
a jolt each time you bite down. Your harsher,
older wounds hide beneath permanent scabs.
Still, pick at them or leave them alone,
should they get bumped both skin and heart feel stabbed.

You're fed pipe-dreams by your well-meaning friends,
but you'll never forget or truly mend.
When you, on your distracted days, slide back
your sleeves and bare your wrists without a thought,
the tight-ridged scars make clear, cuts you inflict
yourself run deeper than those the surgeons wrought.

John Davis

Bus Stop

An umbrella blooms like white godetia.
Hear the quiet within the feathered rain
not the splash of tires, the honk of pizza
delivery vans, the wispy champagne
gurgles of gutters, but the warm quiet
sigh within the dirt, between the concrete
cracks where a scrubby alder-start diets
on moss, rocks and the shadows of the street.
And now the melon green skin of a frog,
his leap, his eyes like pebbles in a pond.
Now the Siamese cat and snub-nosed dog
tattooed on the skin of the skinny blonde.
So loud this quiet. So ragged this sound.
If log-rot could talk, it would pound pound pound.

Picking Blackberries

The container takes its shape from what it contains.—Donald Hall

It was full, the cardboard tub that once held
puffs of popcorn, buttered, salted then flung
in the ditch of weeds beyond the greenfield.
I balanced bulbous berries on my tongue
while picking, stuffing more inside, tasting
the pies to come, cobblers, preserves, jellies,
carried the tub home under whirling
boughs and limbs of alder leaves.
I offered the tub to Mother the way
an altar boy lifts a silver chalice,
hopes he will not drop the blessing or say
the wrong psalm, trip on his gown and mis-
step. It was our best Sunday service, hush
of voices in the kitchen, moist smile, blush.

Robert Beveridge

Robert Beveridge makes noise (xterminal.bandcamp.com) and writes poetry just outside Cleveland, OH. Recent/upcoming appearances in *CircleShow*, *The Litterateur*, and *Vanilla Sex*, among others.

The Balcony

(after Baudelaire)

The things that please us in the world
are simple: rain, a touch, the firelight on your cheek,
its glow beneath my fingers. In your breast,
mistress, your heart's strength girds my weak-

ness, keeps me warm and solemn in this rite
of worship: I carry you, your long hair dangling
over arms and elbows, into the night

outside upon the balcony. Caress
your cheek, its smooth perfection still alight
although we've left the fire behind. Fingers

loose buttons, hooks, lips explore the skin
exposed bit by luscious bit. Passers-
by look on, three floors below. Lost in the glimmer-
glow of flesh on flesh, we do not care.

Peter Branson

Peter Branson has been published in Britain, US, Canada, Ireland, Australasia and South Africa: Acumen, Ambit, Agenda, Envoi, London Magazine, North, Prole, Warwick Review, Iota, Butcher's Dog, Frogmore Papers, Interpreter's House, SOUTH, Crannog, THE SHOp & Causeway. His selected poems came out 2013, his latest collection, 'Hawk Rising' in 2016.

Wakes Night Fair

This megastar's a dazzling super bowl,
bedlam, heaven or hell, explosive fuse
of spinning light; of onion-sizzling steam,
chip fat, spent diesel fumes and candyfloss;
of goldfish magnified in plastic bags,
flash stallholders as loud as jumping jacks;
of urban cowboys leaping on and off
bump cars or herding bucking broncs across
revolving wooden floors with practised ease;
of cherubs chasing dragons seraph-high
like Martinware adrenalin banshees;
of stocking top, a tempting ride of flesh
broadcast, delight exquisitely contrived,
the dark a beacon, cinders underfoot.

Louis Hunt

Louis Hunt teach political theory at James Madison College, Michigan State University. He has published poetry in such journals as *The Rotary Dial*, *Autumn Sky Daily*, *The Road Not Taken*, and *Snakeskin*.

Ink

She brushed the loose blonde hair behind her ear
And touched the fading image of a cross
Etched in black beneath the skin's veneer,
Now ridged and raw from the laser's emboss.

"It hurts," she said, the laser's narrow beam
Stinging like angry wasps against her skin.
For this mistake there was no easy balm.
Pain was the price exacted for her whim.

The laser's knife will leave no lasting scar.
As starfish grow their severed arms again,
Her youthful skin will heal without a mar,
Bearing no tell-tale signs of reckless sin.

The ink beneath her skin is but a trace,
No deeper than the needle's point can sink.
Flaws of the heart are harder to efface;
Blood is more permanent than skin and ink.

Gregory Palmerino

Memoirs

I hate the sunshine—
the way it beckons
me outside like some
one-night hypnotist
hoarding souls to feed
the dead.

Follow me,
instead, to the bed
of the sea, the true
universe that holds
the living day, where
epics are written
and god and goddess
spill their timeless blood
for posterity.

Yates Young

Yates Young has been writing poetry for over forty years. He majored in English Literature and minored in Mandarin Chinese at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In addition to writing original poetry, he translates Classical, Tang and Sung poetry. His poems have appeared in *Spitball (The Literary Baseball Magazine)*, *Bear Creek Haiku*, *The Road Not Taken*, *Ancient Paths*, *The Daytona Beach News-Journal* and *The Caribbean Writer*. He resides in Palm Coast, Florida.

The Funeral Of Stephen Crane

The church was small
Only about a third full.
It seemed that most of the attendees
Were of the lower classes
Who had dropped by to pass time.
A sprinkling of the women
And men looked literary:
Wretched, rag-tag and bob-tail.

The prayers were perfunctory.
The choir the same.
Nearer My God to Thee.
The address was absurd.
The speaker invoked authors
Prime ministers and philosophers.
He touched upon premature death
And The Judgment Day
When the earth and the sun
Shall give up their dead.
Images flashed into my head.

He deserved a service better than
This common-place silly disgrace.
As the hearse rattled down the street
In the stifling heat
Four carriages followed behind.
Not a single person
Was paying attention.

Emily Bowles

Emily Bowles's poetry has appeared in the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets' Calendar, Word Curd, and Page & Spine. She teaches Women's Studies for the UW Colleges and works in nonprofit management.

The World in My Daughter's Earrings

I never thought it made very much sense
for parents to have their daughters' ears pierced
as infants until I had my own child,
who moved the sun and remade earth for me
with her (so tiny!) celestial body,
which contained its own universe of stars.

Before she was born, I had studied the stars
(*a physicist I knew called it nonsense*):
I knew the astrology of my body,
the taunt-drawn arrow of the archer pierced
through the tough-shell (*I am a Cancer*) to me,
softly trembling underneath, like a child.

Vulnerable, invulnerable as a child,
I learned it: "through hardships, to the stars."
What hardships had then been handed to me?
Conjugating the Latin, it made sense,
and I spoke it, dead language, as it pierced
the silence, lettered, that bound my body.

I stop myself--it is not my body,
a story written on or for my child.
Her voice became her own when her cry pierced
through the silence, brighter than a star.
She spoke then in fragments, her own nonsense,
syllables that rewrote the world for me.

Hopeful, helpless, I held her close to me
and knew I'd held a universe in my body.
All I had known dissolved into nonsense.
There she was, inside turned outside, my child,
every wish made on every shooting star.
I had to take her to get her ears pierced.

She was two. I held her hand when he pierced
her ear, punctured it and somehow hurt me,
even though the diamond shone like a star.
She had been perfect, whole, now her body
was open, and she was no longer a child.

Her style, her fashion began to make sense.

My child, your body is its own universe of stars
pulling me, piercing me in ways that will never make sense.

Diane Moomey

Diane has lived and wandered around the US and Canada, and now dips her gardener's hands in California dirt. A regular reader at San Francisco Bay Area poetry venues, Diane has published prose and poetry, most recently in *Mezzo Cammin*, *Glass: a Journal of Poetry*; *The Sand Hill Review*, *California Poetry Quarterly*, *Caesura* and *Red Wheelbarrow*, and has been nominated for a Pushcart prize. She won first prize and an Honorable Mention in the Sonnet category of the 2016 Soul Making Keats Literary Contest, and first prize in the Creative Non-Fiction category of the same competition. https://www.pw.org/content/diane_moomey

Epiphany

No king came riding to the door this morning
dressed in cloth of gold, no magus robed
in deeper thought; nor shepherds, country men
with woolen robes askew from sleeping rough

in fields made hard with winter. None of those.
Nor frankincense. But brief, a flash within
my darkened skull that *might* have been the light
of morning only, blinds left slightly open,

fog of sleep—but I'll believe it was
the nova of your own, your sweet, verily
your sweet and baby face, smiling,
come to bless in spite of all I'd left

undone. You smiling, saying *yes*,
we did, did okay in spite of all.

Yes.

Craig Kurtz

Finding the 21st century obsolete, **Craig Kurtz** versifies Restoration plays, illustrated by Anni Wilson. Excerpts appear in *California Quarterly*, *Dream Catcher (UK)*, *Papercuts (Pakistan)* and *Penn Review*. Visit <http://antickcomedies.blogspot.com/> for particulars. Kurtz and Wilson reside at Twin Oaks Intentional Community.

The Problem with Love Poetry

The problem with love poetry
is, should your efforts amuse me,
you'd be inspired to write more
and that's not what husbands are for.

I want a man to work a trade
so I can have goods ready-made;
a poet never has a dime
and that's a drag for a lifetime.

I need a man who wants children
and makes a home to raise them in;
a poet's always off somewhere
obsessed with publishers unfair.

I'd like a man to pleasure me
and help with chores occasion'ly;
a poet's up late scribbling
and worse, come day, he's sleeping in.

The problem with a love sonnet
is, should I say that I like it,
you'd write enough to fill a shelf
and that's making love to yourself.

A.C. Pavis

Athar C. Pavis grew up in New York City, attended Mount Holyoke College and studied literature in France. She lives both in Maine and in France. Her poems have been published in the UK (*New Poetry, Candelabrum*), in Canada (*The Eclectic Muse*) and in the United States. in *Measure, The Able Muse, The Comstock Review, Slant, Oberon, The Raintown Review, Tule Review, and Trinacria*, among others. She has been twice nominated for a Pushcart Prize and is currently working on a collection of poetry to be entitled *PULLED PORK*.

The Flirt

Francis Huster et al.

“Beautiful eyes,” he said, the usual,
A man sure of himself, the way men are,
Lifting his handsome face to gauge effect,
Declaiming how the seats in the fourth row
Gave the best view and wouldn’t hurt the neck.

He wore an Ascot just the way she liked,
Its flouncing blue, a shirt of cotton sheer,
His cheeks were taut, his regard intense,
Rueful a bit, his mouth, as if he knew
Seduction was just another role of his.

And yet he was observant, paid his due
To beauty as he saw it, dreaming still
Another life, made possible in her,
Albeit for a moment — something new,
Before she turned away and left him flat.

But left him flat for what? A man who gives
A measuring cup for Christmas, practical,
A partner who remembers the gas bill,
Never to gaze at her the way he did —
So in her secret chambers she relives

That moment in *Blood Diamond* the doomed man
Looks at the only woman he has loved,
Or Lensky singing *ya lyublyu vas*,
And thinks next time one word might be enough
Even if it’s just a flirt, to save her life.

Jean L. Kreiling

Jean L. Kreiling's first collection of poems, *The Truth in Dissonance* (Kelsay Books), was published in 2014. Her work has appeared widely in print and online journals, and she is a past winner of a New England Poetry Club Award, the Great Lakes Commonwealth of Letters Sonnet Contest, the *String Poet* Prize, and the *Able Muse* Write Prize.

“Furiant”

(Scherzo from Dvořák's Symphony No. 6)

The title names a folk dance, not a fit
of fury, but there's darkness here, half-lit
by lyric grace: a nearly hostile romp
that sings, a frenzy finely wrought, the stomp
of strings repeating half-step arguments
in minor-key outbursts of arrogance—
a flawless case that can't be proven, made
with frantic vigor, as if to persuade
the undecided, syncopation stealing
their usual heartbeats, until they're reeling
in darkness even as they breathe the light
of agile glee, each note exactly right
in this brisk vehemence, this dance, this race
propelled—perhaps—by fury, won by grace.

Kristen Hendricks

Kristen Hendricks is a full-time mathematician and amateur poet living in Lansing, Michigan.

Oracle

Your fathers knew their fate. I will not say
That they did wrong to press me for the truth
And hang a bitter banner o'er their youth—
Though all disasters came without delay.
But you would have me prophesy, today

Of monsters that lie sleeping down below
The ruined hills and crackling silver streams
And roil and rest with half-forgotten dreams
And labour in their breathing, soft and low
And will not rise unless you tell them so—

The sky would cease and crack, should you deny
The lightning, once you see it burning gold:
Yet let your beating wonderings grow cold,
And turn from your undoing with a sigh.
But do not ask me, love. I will not lie.

Beth Houston

Beth Houston, MA, MFA, has taught creative writing, literature, and composition at ten universities and colleges in California and Florida. She has published six poetry books, two nonfiction books, and nearly three hundred works in literary and professional journals. She is a member of PEN America-Professional and the Academy of American Poets, and is a freelance writer and editor.
www.BethHouston.com.

Femme Fatale

I must applaud the snake for making truth
Creative right up front, his function more
Than realized, slick character more sleuth
Than devil, dredging knowledge from the core:
Symbolic bark, leaves, fruiting apple's juice
Down Adam's chin. But Eve's the one to watch.
Will Eden's complicated rogue seduce
Her lust for consciousness? Curled in the crotch
Where two limbs split, his hiss becomes embroiled
With words, he falls for her, their acts bring pain
That smites Creation's root, life comes uncoiled—
A denouement with no cathartic strain,
But for sheer pathos I would give this play,
This tragic noir, a thumbs-up anyway.

Drew Marshall

Mr. Marshall works as a Program Assistant, in the mental health field.
His poems and short stories have been published in various online and print journals.
He is currently working on a collection of short stories. When not cemented to his desktop keyboard,
he enjoys walking, playing guitar and practicing Tai Chi.

The City That Never Weeps

What's a day in this city
Without your ears being burdened
By sirens and people screaming

Walk the streets, feel the fear
Sense the hate and seething sex
Observe the violence
Ignore the homeless

What ever happened to love and compassion?

The city I grew up in is ancient history
Like millions of other who would if they could
I'd move upstate to the country
Wake up to lakes and trees

See the stars at night
No skyscrapers in sight
No longer divorced from nature
Once again, part of it

You can't Jambalaya on the Bowery
Commune with nature
On 42nd and Eight Avenue

The city that never weeps
Has a bitter taste and rotten smell
I was born and raised here
It's in my blood as well

In younger days
Big Apple odors smelled like heaven
When the city had open spaces to play

New York leaves little left of a man
Compassion is absent from Fun City
The most unforgiving in the land