

Dangerous Condition



He sings of kisses and lonely hearts
of tear dewed eyes in moonlit glow
everywhere women watch
his grey ghost face
breasts heave clammy and hot
they hum along with his scratchy bass
in Peoria,
Schenectady,
and Santa Fe
caught by the ether flung into space
silver shivers on the Emerson.



Geritol and Lipton Tea
mix with isotopes and diffy-qs
men jabber and watch
the console's wistful lights
pushing buttons, twisting knobs,
they play on giant Segas
Generals of the Milky Way
and dream of power
beyond the savage heat
between a woman's legs
that devoured their youth in lust and shame –
dream now old men, dream and pray
that you control the gamma rays.



A doctor of philosophy will note
in a treatise on the reactor's crumbling down
crumbling down
his ukulele was flat that night -
or was the ether simply warped
by the plasm's particle streams
disarrayed by fire and screams?

Big men in dungarees sit
fat jowls frozen in fear
by the sudden light
that the trembling beneath their feet
brings their death tonight
between the ukulele notes
his grainy voice lilts
hot wind blow through the floors
towards the stars and home.

The Secret Life Of Otto Pivner

Forrest Gregg

The Bengals play on Sunday
to sparrowing fans, sparkling bands
while river mud lumbers by
indifferent to humans inked
in black with speckled orange.
Another sack another score
the billboard flashing
43 to 4.

Halftime
Forrest Gregg walks through tunnels, turns, and past the
noise
across the street to Nick's Retreat looking for
a Twinky or a candy bar
and any kind of booze
He sez to Nick "I'm Forrest Gregg and how are you"
who stares in wonder
then replies, "never heard of you"
and polishes another glass.
A candy cane, two shots of rye
"Got to run, I'm good for this"
and out the door he flies.

More stinkers cross the goal line
More tackles lunge at air
the black topped stumbling stragglers
boo and hiss despair
then head to Nick's Retreat
for beer and maudlin swagger.

Silence bands the river
the billboard growls and glimmers
63 to 6
at fishes, rocks and oil slicks.
Forrest Gregg slumps against a folding chair

an empty shot glass in his fist
outside the river gently murmurs
grey geese honk and hiss
today like yesterday forgets about tomorrow.

Ida Dalsler

April in Milano wet and cold
she snips and tucks, kneads and folds
soft grey hair plumed against
garrets and puckered air.
Bennie sits and stares
chewing figs and lemon skins
disgust curls her lips snick snack
his heart roars though clicking teeth
betrayed by cock
and history
snick snack.

He is fearless
a senseless fighter
sickened by the weak
and their blubbering lips.
Now he sits afraid
of her eyes
her breath seethes above the old woman's head
gulps of air
mock his trebling knees
she knows, her smoldering eyes dare
him back to stare.

The sky snakes violet and cream
his voice flutters -
lies, laments, singsong words
fall like rubbish from his bowels.
She shrieks
scissors pierce and weave
but there is no forgiveness
from God nor Ida
her screams rip through his chest
he stumbles
cursing his craven heart and
shaking voice
and runs.

Pema Chödrön

Ringling Brothers 1985, Row E, the center ring
Pema Chödrön watches
clowns romp, fall down, stare a frown
the boy next to her stares too
at the line of elephants trunk to tail
lumbering through the canvas flaps
Oh he ohs, Oh Oh Oh
a gentle whisper
Be sad my child, they are slaves
of human dreams
her eyes dew dropped, nose asnuffle
yet carry salvation on glittering lights.

Kongo sighs
another night of apples, screams and blank applause.
He craves the boxcar's rattle
the only mantra he has ever known
Then sharp *herauf*. Sheila groans
a thousand pounds digs into his back
bleibst du, bleibst du, Kongo bleibst
gentle noise he's heard before
schon Apfel kommt
and swishes nose above an ear
Apfel kommt

Pema shakes her head
Enough!
I want to scream!
Kongo eyes the crowd
for the voice he hears in dreams
blitz lights clatter on iron rails
clickity clack
the elephants dance.
Kongo rises to clap his feet
for the boy he cannot reach
Pema breathes through
the tumbling beasts
into the lungs of him beside her.