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Eastern Kentucky University, English Department

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AURORA

A U R O R A

1995

Patrons

Harry Brown
Andre DeCuir
Marjorie Farris
Dominick Hart
Ordelle Hill
William Lane
Walter Nelson
Veronica Nielsen

Bonnie Plummer
Peter Remaley
Vivian Rogers
Barbara Sowders
Dorothy Sutton
Charles Sweet
Isabelle White
Robert Witt

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Not Exactly Minding My Own Business

Whoever pulls my sleeve and asks
what makes you so sure?
what gives you the right?
probably can't hear self-doubt
mumbling under my soapbox
or see a blushing social phobia
trying to swallow my thoughts
urging me to stammer sorry excuses
for being in a mood

but remembering the day's news
senators bleating about health care reform
confusing immigration quotas
with sending troops back to Kuwait
I remember the answer
to what makes you so sure?
what gives you the right?

BECAUSE I'M THE POET THAT'S WHY.
IT'S MY JOB to warn you plural you
when civilization starts knocking down cones
and failing breath-a-lizer tests on all Hallow's eve.

Connie Meredith

What Happened to the Music

Friday afternoon's radio broadcast
features tuba composers;
late night TV presents a would-be
president playing saxophone.
Dancing might shadows ask sleepless curtains
what these events portend. Dare we hope
culture rises despite hip-hop
skinny hair droopy drawers squealing

loose-termed lyrics? A reprieve
from enhanced (or worse)
electronically generated scores?
O, can these winds herald a renaissance?
Will changing leaders mitigate
garage bands' regurgitated licks
and backseat speakers' boosted bass?
Rub your feet together and hope for warmth
with night frogs and crickets;
but hold on, a little music in the
White House isn't a global cure. If
the amps blow, kiss digital recordings
goodby, and maybe your legs
and all the crickets, too.

Breakfast sunbeams carry a tune
to the polls where the believers elect
this governor with a reed.

On cue, citizens rest in their homeland,
drift into lullabies--but wake rubbing their eyes
asking what happened to the music?
Surely hundred dollar speaker wire
isn't defective; and sound waves don't disappear--
so where's the song, the tune of liberty,
freedom and justice for all?
Where's the two part harmony?
Who's up late writing songs
for lovers and poor working stiffs,
and arias for the homeless,
with a chorus for the unemployed?
Who's choreographing the show
for health care and good old civil rights?
Nobody's happy with politicians.
We're tired of easy-listening.
We want to rock and roll, swing our partners
and get down to it; but we're up against
the boys in the band.

Connie Meredith

Lucid Dreams

Allison Nicole Hunter

The pain had subsided into a deep blue shallow as she stood staring intently into the oceans of persons floundering in the chaotic city below. Their words washed up to her in a billow of distorted confusion. Engines revved. Car horns blew. And she was tossed about, lost amid it all, slowly being worn smooth by its infestious waves. Dejected, she lowered the mute of glass and pulled the shade. With a disheartened sigh, the shapely, small framed figure turned to her darkened, shadow traced bedroom. As she drudged across her floor to her dresser, the floor writhed under her. She fumbled for her lighter. Finally, her soft, shaking hands laid hold of it. Her thumb rolled over the wheel of the lighter and pressed down on the button to release the fluid. No flame, only a hiss. Again she tried, and was teased by a spark. On her third attempt, it flicked a weak blue flame. Cupping her hand around the glow, she passed it onto the wick of a vanilla scented candle. The sent of vanilla was sadly inspiring to her. It seemed to aid her in uniting her disjointed heart and soul into her river of ink and tears. Dancing atop the wax column, the flame revealed the mirror that stood behind it reflecting a mimicking clone of both ignited and igniter. Slowly, Selene's eyes rose to meet those of her reflection. She was startled by the unfamiliarity of the empty blue orbs. Inchoate, otiose, they manifested her soul as it had never before been displayed. Every other feature was as she recalled -- straight blond hair, a long, well defined face, full rosy lips, and a porcelain complexion. Tears rolled down her face as if to wash away the misery. A few reluctant drops clung to her long lashes. She closed her lids and opened them again in hope of finding some spark of life, but they were greeted with void. Again lowering her lids, they lifted as if a dam releasing a great flood. Her reflection distorted, she rubbed her hands over her face and eyes to restore some of her vision. She pulled out the drawer at her waist, and extracted a cigarette. Placing it between her lips, she bent to light it in the flame. As the smoke filled her lungs, her nerves settled a bit. Crossing the room, she exhaled slowly and found her blue chair that

awaited at the shade covered window. Gravely, she sank into the soft comfort and listlessly finished her cigarette. Dean, her husband, wasn't due home until after eleven, and she saw no point in wearing her Mona Lisa guise for the four walls that encased her. They were all too familiar with the torment ritualistically expressed to them. So, alone she waited, unable to escape her mind. Her thoughts ran rabid through their playground. They defeated Selene's efforts of suppression and intensified her doubts. Although faith in Dean loomed large in her heart, sometimes she could feel her faith being heckled by Hope.

Dean was such a striking figure -- dark complexion, strong jaw-line, intense, brown eyes, black hair, and a well toned physique. One would be foolish to think he would be content with a miserable creature such as herself. Yes, her doubts were confirmed, he must be seeking affection from another. So many times she had been given, what she considered, evidence to confirm her suspicion of his disloyalty. His receptionist at his accounting firm was undoubtedly suspect. When Selene called for Dean, her account of him always seemed evasive and fending. It seemed Dean was always in a meeting which "he" insisted not be disturbed. And if Selene visited his office, she was invariably aware of the receptionist's furtive glances, as if she were holding her in comparison and reassuring herself that her boss found no pleasure in his sworn mate. Or maybe the teller at the bank. It was infuriating to see Dean and pretty little teller number three giggle and flirt as Dean deposits his pay check. Then, as if to twist the knife, number three always tilts her head and flashes a taunting smile as she bids Selene adieu. Yes, Dean found in her all the qualities Selene lacked.

Selene was taunted by these women even as she slept. Many nights she awoke crying because Dean was unfaithful in her dreams -- kissing other women, making love to them, echoing the words he had whispered to her in moments of passion. When Selene confronted him with her ever-waking nightmares, he compassionately reassured her that they were merely dreams. Somehow, that just didn't suffice. Often, she treated him coldly because of something he did or said in her dreams. Her life had become one long, lucid dream, in which, she could find neither rest nor reality. She was captured by her fear and enslaved by her jealousy.

Once again, Selene sat alone in their bedroom ravaged in fear that Dean lay in the arms of another woman. She gazed around the dimly lit room. A cluttered desk squatted opposite her. Crumpled sheets were strewn about the bed. Their wedding picture rested on her bedside table and on the dresser the flame still danced atop the candle. Her still moist eyes grew weary from searching her ill-lit surroundings, so she laid them to rest. In her blind silence, Selene rotated her wedding ring, as she breathed in the vanilla scented air. The image of the candle burned on her eyes in negative. Slowly it faded leaving her in complete darkness. Shadows lurked in the dark corners of her mind anxious to convert clarity to chaos. In defense, Selene recalled a poem by John Keats she had committed to memory. It seemed to her to be more of a prayer than a poem, and, therefore, she always ended with an Amen.

O soft embalmer of the still midnight,
Shutting with careful fingers and benign
Our gloom-pleas'd eyes, embower'd from the light,
Enshaded in forgetfulness divine:
O soothest Sleep! if so it please thee, close,
In the midst of this thine hymn, my willing eyes,
Or wait the Amen ere thy poppy throws
Around my bed its lulling charities.
Then save me or the passed day will shine
Upon my pillow, breeding many woes:
Save me from curious conscience, that still hoards
Its strength for darkness, burrowing like the mole;
Turn the key deftly in the oiled wards,
And seal the hushed casket of my soul.

And with these mighty words, she slowly defeated her imagination, finally, lulling herself into a listless, thoughtless nothing Turning over on her stomach, she searched for the floor with her tiny, dangling leg and established her footing. She shuffled over to the giant picture window and tugged at the shade until it bounced up and whirled around the roller. At first cowering at the intensity of the sun, she slowly grew accustomed to the light. She looked down onto the papershingled roof that covered the porch. Out on the lawn stood Dean clad in the red sweater Selene had bought for him yesterday. Yes, he looked quite handsome in it. He was

passing a baseball to a little boy of five, maybe six. His hair was black, and his brown eyes, though young, were strangely intense. A familiar voice sang out Dean's name, as a woman in a gray suit and pumps run out onto the lawn. Gleefully, the little boy sprinted to meet the happy couple. In unison, the trio turned to the window and waved to the sad silhouette. The shade slammed down like an iron curtain. In a panic, Selene ran to the adjoining room. It was decorated for a child -- enormous crayons and huge blocks were stacked in the corner. Wind-up dolls and teddy bears littered the floor. A window loomed high upon the wall. Selene frantically pushed one of the red blocks under it and climbed on top of the letter "A." She placed her hands on the plastic film, and a room illuminated on the other side. Files of motionless people were lined up in front of teller windows. At window number three stood Dean with his teller. They were kissing passionately, while vainly attempting to disrobe. Piles of ties, blouses, and trousers rapidly accumulated around them. Selene cried out for them to stop but was acknowledged by no one. The bank manager mechanically strolled by and hung a "Closed" sign over the window and the room went dark. Leaping down from the block, Selene raced to the staircase. Her feet pounded down the stairs and carried her to a large, white kitchen. At the back of the kitchen in a little breakfast nook, she found a window that covered the entire wall. Through the window, she saw a vast, open field. In the middle of field were rows of white chairs arranged for a wedding ceremony. At the front stood a priest, Dean, and herself. Dean wore a black tuxedo with especially long tails, and Selene wore her wedding dress. Behind Selene was Dean's receptionist in an identical wedding dress, and behind her, in the same dress awaited teller number three, then the cashier from the grocery store, the lady from the bakery, the librarian, the neighbor's wife, and an ever growing procession of anxious brides -- reality suddenly interposed. Her heart raced as tears began to cloud her eyes. She could no longer live in her tormented vessel. She had to seek peaceful waters on which to sail. With a defeated heart she rose and made her way to her bedside table. Inside, she found her sleeping pills. Dolefully, she carried them to her desk and cleared a placed to write.

My Dearest Dean,

Once again, in your absence I have been challenged with the vicious waking dream of a desecration of our sacred vows. I am incessantly taunted by my uncertainty and doubt, and wake to find only a gold band to lead me to solace, and following it, I am led back through my cycle of misery. Many nights I've waited out the darkness in fear that sleep might bring me closer to truth, and many days I've prayed for the night to come more quickly so that I may sooner escape the stark images that profess themselves before me. Substance has been replaced by Shadow, and Shadows follow me in search of a home. Now I desire only to bath in the waters of Lethe. To cease upon midnight with no pain. And that I shall do My Love. . .

Eternally yours,

Selene

In Touch With God
(A tribute to Albert Fish)

Hedonistic rupture,
abandoned at birth.
To molest a child
your life will get worse.
Twenty-nine or so pins that stick through my spine--
I devoured a girl in just nine.
When the knife went clear through her neck,
perverted compulsion, I became erect.
My love for pain is not a disease.
I love to be whipped till blood runs to my knees.
Surpassing such tyros as Marquis de Sade,
No matter what happens, I'm in touch with God.

Dustin Smothers

The Wizard of Oz

Following a path of golden rectangles,
a man of straw impaled on a stake appears.
Where do we go in search for a brain?
Should we go left or should we go right?
The left is chosen with flowers of slumber.
The Tin man beats on his chest with
the power of thunder.
His hat a funnel that drips to the knee,
the squeak of a can that will set him free.
Walking the square with arm and hand,
king of the jungle, Lion I am.
I am the heir. I am the god.
I am the wizard of Oz.

Dustin Smothers

Eye of Heaven

The fog misted around it dreamily,
No outlines visible.
A faint yellow glow revealed its position.
Silence thick as the fog filled the ears.
No movement, no motion, no sound
Only silence.

Beth Streble

Summer Squall

The air hot and tight,
Constricting breath and movement.
Finally it descended, Removing the compression.
A sparse haze suspended in the trees
Rain glided from above.
The faucet gushed, streamed, dripped and
Eventually halted.
Warningly, the sky rumbled.
Distantly, a bird warbled, Another rejoined.
Nature reveled in eternity.

Beth Streble

Laundry

Spinning and tumbling through
interminable cycles.
Revolutions of time pass
Pressed permanently into wrinkles
Not expected, yet always emerging
Taking lifetimes to smooth.

Beth Streble

Poetry

Seemingly formidable
Ground fashioned from stone.
Quick survey reveals unyielding rock
But digging lightly exposes
Soft clumps of earth
A rhythm begins, a pattern.
Initial scraping leads to harder dirt.
Fancies of ceasing emerge . . .
Mystery intoxicates
Delving, excavating.
Earth sails through the air
like words.
Finally,
Discovery.

Beth Streble

Ellen

Robert Hopkins

Beep-Beep-Beep-Beep
WHAM!

My eyes shot open as "I am Ironman . . ." blasted through my eardrums, shocking me awake. Someone had changed the radio station on my alarm clock again. *I hate Black Sabbath.*

I turned off the alarm clock and looked out the window. Blue sky, a couple of clouds, seemed to be a nice October morning. I rolled back the covers and shoved my feet in my well worn, corduroy slippers and grabbed my terry cloth robe from the bedpost. The aroma of coffee wafted upstairs and tingled my senses.

I looked back over my shoulder, as I left my room headed for the kitchen, at my unmade bed. "Maybe I should make my bed," I thought to myself.

"Nah," I said aloud after reflection, "I'll let Ellen do it. She does such a nice job. The corners are always folded perfect, and it hangs even on both sides. The pillows always get fluffed up when she makes the bed. I like that. I like that at night. I like for my head to sink into the pillows. I don't ever remember to fluff the pillows."

My continued quest for coffee led me downstairs. As I entered the kitchen, I glanced at the picture window. The plants on the window sill basked contentedly in the morning sunshine. The spider plant had grown out of control.

"Ellen has such a way with plants. Looks like they might need little water, though," I said to myself once I had taken a closer look at the plants. "That mum seems a bit dried out."

I walked over and pulled my favorite *Dr. Who* coffee mug out of the cabinet. I noticed that Ellen's #1 mom cup was missing.

"She must be in the den," I mumbled under my breath.

I poured myself a cup of that strong, black brew and took a sip.

"Damn . . . ," I cursed, "Burned my lip, awful hot coffee."

I walked over to the picture window and watched a squirrel as he romped playfully through the trees. I raised my cup to my lips to partake of my coffee, and my cup was empty.

"My cup is empty?!", I exclaimed in amazement.

I placed my cup down on the counter, and shook my head.

"Ellen's been dead for four years. What are you thinking of Frank? Ellen's been dead four years and you still try to drink from an empty coffee cup. You still taste that good coffee Ellen used to make."

I turned back around and looked out the picture window again.

"They were beautiful plants when Ellen was alive. They are nothing more than dead weeds now," I sighed to myself.

I heard the dogs barking outside, and I looked out the back door. There was a red pickup coming up my dirt driveway. It was Sal's Butchers.

"Sal sure has come awful early this morning."

I threw open the back door, and ventured outside. "Beautiful day, today," I mentioned to Jessica, Tasha, and Radar, my three dogs.

My dogs ran around me, barked their good mornings, and jumped up on me. I petted them all for a minute, then I petted them all some more, and then I told them to get down.

"Get down. Sit down. Lay down. Get down. STAY down. Damn dogs," I grumbled.

As I watched the red pickup come closer, and closer, it left a big cloud of dust behind it. I stuck my hand into my robe pocket. I felt around for a moment, and finally found my Pall Malls, and a worn pack of matches. I lit one up and took a big draw off it.

"Tastes good. Tastes mighty good," I said out loud, appreciating the flavor of my first morning cigarette.

I took another pull off of it, as Sal's truck came closer, and closer. "I hope he brought me some coffee. I could use some real coffee now. None of this imaginary crap."

I raised my empty fingers to my lips, and realized I quit smoking two years after Ellen died.

"I'm having a ruff morning of it folks. A ruff morning with this reality/non-reality stuff."

Sal pulled up, cut off the engine, and yelled, "Morning . . . mornin' Frank."

I responded, "Morning, Sal. How's the butcher business?"

"Just fine. Got the ends for your dogs here," Sal said as he held up a package.

"Thanks Sal."

"Weren't no trouble. Weren't no trouble 'tall. I also brought ya a cup of coffee. I sure do miss my mornin' coffee since that Miss Ellen died," Sal said, with a slightly saddened look on his face.

"Yep, Ellen sure could make a nice cup of coffee. Why don't you come up here and sit a spell, Sal?"

"I'd love to Frank, but I got a whole bunch more errands to run. Gotta go to the post office, gotta go to the church. Think I'm going to head out to the stockyards today, and pick me up a cow or two. Get 'em good and cut up. Business been pretty good lately."

"Well, come and sit a spell anyway."

"Well, alright. Here's yall's meat." Sal handed me the package and a cup of coffee. "Gotta get my smokes outta the truck."

I turned to set the heavy package of meat wrapped in white butchers paper down. I turned back around to ask Sal to get me a cigarette from his truck. There was no Sal. There was no truck.

I snatched back up the meat, and held it in my hands, and pressed it to my chest, and then shoved my nose in it. I took the fragrance of it in.

"It's real. It has to be real. It smells like meat."

Sal was there, and then he was gone.

"How could he have left without me noticing?"

I pressed the meat to my nose and smelled again. There was definitely meat in there. I was definitely holding the package.

The dogs were going hog wild around my legs due to the fact that I was holding a package of meat, so I decided to feed them.

"You damn dogs! Always jumping up, and whining, and drooling. Fact, look at that puddle of drool under you." I pointed to one of hounds. "Well, I guess you can't help it being a hound and all."

I opened that package, and by God, there was a human hand in it!

"What the hell?!" I yelled as I threw the package down hurriedly.

I waited a minute, and then decided to check the package again, just to make sure I had seen what I thought I had seen.

"Yep, it's a human hand, alright," I mumbled under my breath.

"I don't know how this package got here, and I don't rightly care, and I don't know if what I'm seein' is what I'm seein', but I'm damn well going to feed my dogs."

I threw that human hand onto the porch, and that was when I noticed it was actually a hog leg. I felt better about myself. Maybe just a little bit more Christian. I felt just a little bit better about not having to face the preacher with a cock-eyed grin on my face, knowing I had fed my dogs a human hand. Maybe somebody I had killed, and fed to my damn dogs.

I reached my hand in my robe pocket again, in search of my non-existent cigarettes.

"Damn, I quit smoking. I am having a hard day of it folks. I am having a hard day. Maybe some breakfast will do me some good."

I headed back into the kitchen and decided that I was really not in the mood for breakfast.

"I just might go fishing today. Yep, that is exactly what I'll do. Something to help me relax. Maybe make my

day go better," I decided, happy at the thought of going fishing.

I headed back to the bedroom to retrieve my worn dungarees, white tee shirt, and plaid flannel. I then walked to the bathroom, where I proceed to erase that three day stubble that had grown on my middle aged face. As I pulled the razor down my face, a gray hair stood out at me from the edge of my receding hairline. I stared back at it, willing it to go away.

"I'm too young to be gray. Forty-two is too young to be gray. As a matter of fact, forty-two is too young to have a son in college, and I have one of them."

"Frank, you're talking to yourself again," the reflection replied.

"Well, nobody here to talk to, might as well. And certainly nobody here to call me crazy except me, and I'll never admit to that," I answered back.

I continued to shave my face, debated whether to brush my teeth or not.

"I sure do hate the taste of coffee and toothpaste in the morning."

Brrr-ring. The telephone scared me. I jumped and nicked my face.

"Ouch! . . . God . . . Damn . . . It!"

"Who in the *hell* is calling me at this hour of the morning? Everybody in the world knows I shave my face at this time every day of my life," I exclaimed in wonder, at the ignorance of the phone.

I pulled a small piece of tissue off the toilet paper roll, and pressed it to my bleeding face.

"Well good morning to you too, neighbor," I said as I walked to pick up the phone.

"Hello?" I asked, picking up the receiver.

"Dad, is that you?" my son's voice responded to me.

"Who the *hell* else would it be, and why the *hell* are you calling me while I'm shaving? I nicked my face."

"You sure are grumpy," he retorted, "What's happened to you today?"

"Not much," I replied, lying through my teeth.

I decided not to tell my son about my adventures. Last year he tried to get me locked up in the nut house. I really didn't appreciate that from the young man to whom I had taught the fine art of life to.

More than once I've told him, "I brought you into this world, and by God, I can take you out, and make another one just like you." He minded most of the time, but every once in a while, like last year, he tried to prove he is just a little bit better than his old man. All because he went to college.

"Dad, are you there?" my son asked, obviously wondering about me.

"Yeah. Were you talking? You should know better than just talk away at me when I'm not quite . . . woke up yet."

"Dad . . . I was thinking of coming up this weekend," my son proposed hesitantly.

"That'd be fine. Just fine," I replied.

"I was also thinking of bringing my new girlfriend with me."

"What's *she* like? Is she nice? Is she pretty? Is she smart? Does she come from money?" I inquired. A father could never be too careful, you know.

"Dad!! Why don't you just meet her?"

"I like to know these things," I replied defensively, "Do I need to get out the fine china for miss fancy pants, or can we all just act we're down home?"

"Just be yourself dad, and be sure to make up the spare room."

"Now you know I can't make beds like your mother could," I said, as I made a quick inventory of my bed making skills.

"That's all right. You just do what you can. Maybe we can go for a picnic on Sunday."

"That'd be fine, son. You make sure to bring your fishing pole," I commanded.

"Dad, you know I don't like to . . ."

"Just bring it," I said as I cut him off. "Why don't you try to make your old man happy for once."

"All right. Well, take care of yourself, dad. I'll see you Saturday,"

"Bye, son."

I placed the handset of the old victorian style phone back on its cradle, and wondered why I haven't replaced the phone yet. I've always hated that phone. It's the kind you have to dial. You know, rotary. Ellen did love it, though. She would sit on that thing for hours, gabbing to all the socialites in the town. She never would have much to do with them in person. She always said they were too uppity for her, but she sure would talk on the phone. She was a good woman, Ellen was. I sure did miss her.

Shaving cream dripped onto my slipper, and I decided to head to the bathroom so at least the shaving cream could drip onto the tile floor. Something easy to clean up. I glanced over at the tub once I entered to bathroom, and noticed soap scum.

"I guess I'll have to clean the bathroom before company gets here."

I looked back into the mirror, and saw that my face had dripped blood down the front of my white tee shirt. I grabbed a towel and decided to just wipe the remaining shaving cream from my face, and go half shaved for the day.

"I don't really care. The fish won't know any different, the bait sure won't know any different, and I'll just pretend that I don't know any different," I said in defiance of my hygiene.

As I finished wiping my face, the phone rang again. I looked at my reflection in the mirror and said, "I don't care who it is. I'm not answering it. It's probably Josh calling back to tell me him and his 'fancy pants' girlfriend can't make it up this weekend."

". . . Damn it," I curse as the phone continued to ring.

I threw the towel covered in shaving cream and blood down, and proceed to the phone.

"Hello? Hello?" I asked the dial tone.

"Just like important city folk not to wait for you to get to the phone once they called you."

Brrr-ring. I heard the *phone* again.

"Great. Now I have ringing in my ears. Sounds like the phone, but maybe it's the door bell."

I headed downstairs, and threw open the door. The dogs, with their bellies bloated from breakfast, wagged happily upon seeing me. But nobody was there, and the sound was getting louder.

-SNORT-SNORT- "Huh?"

I awoke to find a smooth, velvety arm brushing the tip of my nose, followed by the faint scent of lavender. My eyes opened wide! It's Ellen!

"Ellen! . . . Ellen . . . It's . . . It's . . . You!" I stuttered in disbelief.

"Of course it is me, Frank." She yawned loudly and stretched with catlike slowness. "Who did you expect at 7:00 in the morning? Now, would you please turn off the alarm?"

The high pitched whine of the alarm continued in reply.

"Frank, what is the matter with you? Get up. You have to go to work."

"You've been dead for four years!" I yelled, not knowing exactly what was going on.

Ellen stared at me blankly, "Frank, you are ridiculous. Get up and take a shower."

I reached over and turned off the alarm, then turned over to look at the woman I haven't seen in four years. I brushed my hand along her forehead and cheek, and traced the line of her jaw.

"I love you," I said softly.

"Frank . . ."

"Shh . . . don't say anything," I held my index finger to her lips.

--Shhh-Thump--

Ellen pulled away, and with a death grip asked, "Frank, what's that noise?"

"I don't know, and I don't care. I can't believe you're alive," I replied. Ellen was the only thought occupying my still reeling mind.

"Did you have a strange dream about me being dead?", Ellen asked, as she finally began to grasp my early morning reaction to her.

"I might have, but I think you have been dead for four years."

--Shhh-Thump--

"Frank, it was only a dream. I really wish you would get up and find out what that noise is."

"Honey, I don't care. Why don't you go make me a pot of coffee. I haven't had a cup of your coffee in four years. It's just about killed me. No, better yet, let me hold you. No, let's . . . Well I've missed so many things."

--Shhh-Thump--

"Frank, please snap out of it and go see what that noise is," Ellen commanded in a stern voice.

Anything to make Ellen happy. I shoved my feet in my slippers and headed downstairs. I stood in the middle of the living room when I heard that noise again.

"I remember that noise. I know what that noise is and I don't like it. I don't like it at all," I said to myself, with the recognition of the noise scaring me fully awake.

I ran in the kitchen and threw the back door wide open. The dogs weren't on the porch. I stepped outside. I didn't see anyone. I didn't hear anything. Silence. No birds, no wind, no dogs, no Sal. Nothing. Then that sound. I knew for sure what that sound was then, and I got a chill to my bones.

I ran back into the house, and darted up the stairs, taking two at a time.

"Ellen!", I screamed at the top of my lungs.

"Ellen! . . . Ellen say something!"

"What is it Frank?!" Ellen asked in slight horror upon hearing the tone of my voice, "What's that noise?"

I ran into the bedroom and fell down on the bed.

"Ellen, listen to that noise. Listen real carefully and tell me what you think it is."

"Sounds like somebody digging a hole. Maybe for planting a bush. No, maybe filling a . . . Oh, Frank. Is someone outside digging?"

I sat up slowly and turned to face Ellen with a resigned calmness, "Ellen, that sound isn't coming from outside the house. I don't know where we are, but I remember that sound. I'll know that sound till the day I die."

"What is it Frank?" she asked, with rising panic in her voice.

I stared at the ceiling, formulating my answer, "When I was eight years old, they buried my mother. That is the sound of dirt hitting the top of a coffin."

But there was no reply.

Australia

Blue feathers grow out the youth's head;
A glass of olive juice rests in a hand
(a hand with an earring between each finger).
The donuts are forty-six cents each.
Green teeth grow out of the youth's head;
A glass of corn juice rests on a continent
(a continent with one country in its ear).

Flash Mayer

As Blood Flows

"Denn die Todten reiten schnell"
(For the Dead travel fast")

A warrior in tattered armor;
hands grip a ten-foot spear:

stained red,
covered in darkness,
and piercing the clouds.

The chants of Munich fill his head;
Wails from Buda-Pesth rise higher than the spear:
St. Andrew prays to his God;
the fangs of Ordog prepare to strike:

That Golden Labyrinth
*"I think and think on things impossible,
Yet love to wander in that golden maze." Dryden*

Guide meat by the Fur which lines
 Jasmine's toes.
Allow meat to converse with the likes of
 John Dryden,
 Thomas Jefferson, and
 Joanna Southcott
 on the radiance of the physical puzzle.
Azof Gralin tells theme to include the likes of
 Peter Steele,
 St. Paul, and
 Clive Barker
 in the festivities regarding the labyrinth.
 If it was not a simple
satanic snare, it must be a call from God.
 Peter Steele
screams of how he 'can see God!'
 John Dryden
ponders on why he loves to wander;
 the brass is in the alchemist's monkey.
 St. Paul
worries over a lack of knowledge.
Azof Gralin tells theme about the red eyes.
 Joanna Southcott
is pregnant with the fur which lines her toes'
desire to trample the snow-smothered maze;
 she is only sixty years old.
Azof Gralin can't loose youth.
 Clive Barker
uses urine to lay waste to the snow;
Barker makes the maze golden;
the King of Maine has no Barkian gold.
 Thomas Jefferson
whispers to Steele about desires to harvest
the maze and study its golden growth.

Each morning gives rise to a new
Golden Dawn for the Golden Maze.
Azof Gralin watches Crowley and Yeats
as they
discuss their own maze; Jesus can't loose youth;
youth can't loose Jesus.
Allow meat to feel the summer breeze between
her toes.
Clive Barker savors the melted snow;
the King of Maine finds it pungent.

Flash Mayer

