

Grass Mountain

for Gary Snyder

far from boiler rooms
and shipyards
from Siuslaw or Shokoku-ji
your head rigid
and necessary

I watched you once
at San Francisco State
thru a small window
in the door of a
classroom

I laughed then
like fire and dry wood

We spend our time
don't we, Gary?
we walk schoolyards
in wind
talking quickly surely
deciphering each other
applying for things
locking the office door
over small silly poems

did I tell you
once as I bathed
in a creek
I saw your face
in the hillside?

as big as world

you sent pictures
of Ishi bathing there
naked
and I smiled

felt your hand at
my heart again

We really had it
didn't we, Gary?
at Grass Mountain
throwing pebbles
in ponds
for texture
making eyes at strays
laughing at that redhead
having a joint
and whisky
over dinner

in '63 in Oregon
with Robin
you were piling
lumber like
some destiny

I threw newspapers
at dawn while
Nancy slept
watched them
slap concrete

and even those things
didn't make sense

I listened to the
Truckee river once
slept in a turn-out
there with the

ghosts of the Donners

I lived there
for the moment
while you struggled
for survival
in San Francisco

those ghosts taught
me not to separate

What comes next
for us, Gary?
do you remember
David?
"I'm going to do something
for TV," he said
"somebody has to,"
you told him
and we laughed
and held hands
like fire and dry wood.

