

Jeffery Jivey

...and Red Wine.

The next poem I write will have long
Walks down yellow leaf-lined streets.
There will be loud music—The Rolling Stones and
Bach. There will be dancing—mad, uncontrollable
Twirls and jumps. Cigarettes, open windows and Wanda
Singing on the fire escape at 4:00 am. There will be lazy
Sunday mornings spent in bed—the newspaper, strong
Coffee and opera. Exotic fruits, black roses and glances
Between strangers across smokey, dimly lit rooms in
New York City. There will be nudity—bare flesh—and
Flickering candles...

There will be you and me, driving the
Streets in your AMC Pacer, listening to AM radio,
Hands—your right, my left—clasped tightly...

Natural Selection

i hear you moving about in the kitchen
just after sunrise
you go outside in your tiger-striped bathrobe to
turn the sprinkler on the brown yard

i stand nude on the back porch and watch
 you untangle the hose and wrestle it to the ground
 as you step over rotten lemons that have
 fallen from the tree

i make tea in the chipped blue mug and crouch
 down on the back steps.
 a bird, so tiny it could fit in a spoon, lies
 dead on the patio
 "It's natural selection," you say,
 "the weak ones always get dropped."

i dress and check my reflection in the bathroom mirror,
 the whites of my eyes have turned red.
 "Be home early," you say as i grab my car
 keys off the dresser, "I want to see a movie...."

Later, on the freeway in stop-and-go traffic
 i push the select-o-buttons madly and smoke cigarettes,
 glad to be away — safe from
 your pawing hands and kneading.
 i hang on to the wheel like a vile jungle animal and
 hum along to the Joy Division song
 on the radio.

December

The first time we
 meet in New York
 City it will be
 snowing. No
 one will stop
 to take a picture

of us as we stand
inches apart and
shake hands on a
busy street corner.
Taxicabs will continue
to pass, splashing dirty
slush onto our wool
coats. We will walk
in silence to a Cafe
where we will sit for
hours sipping espresso,
fingering sugar packets, and
sharing glances. The
smoke from your cigarette
will rise and hover
around your head like the
mist in a graveyard that
might cover a tomb-
stone at dawn, making
the epitaph barely
readable. Just after mid-
night you will lean forward,
your face — pale and
thin — emerges from
the haze, your eyes like
green marbles, and slowly,
unnoticed, we will kiss.