

# children *churches* & daddies

issn #1068-5154



scarsuonreppnd

Flora Non Grata

Bruce W. Niedt

I am the czar of my garden  
awakened from long winter sleep.  
I dictate what will grow here,  
how large, how high -

I nurture the elite,  
what I have hand-picked and planted,  
bulbs, seeds, bushes.

I suffer no encroachers.  
I am judge, jury,  
executioner.

These common invaders  
try to sway me with flowers,  
purple or yellow, as a rule -

but all appeals are denied.  
They come up by the root  
chaffed to the side, into the black  
plastic bag of oblivion.

I have purged them from my kingdom,  
these prolific undesirables,  
but they always return,  
in time and force,  
proletariat that they are.

# Notes from a Volcano

Ellen Wernecke

We all need  
an escape more temperate than  
this gravel-shirred lover,  
the mother cliff with cracks  
Wide-whirring open. A cloud  
of Freudian guilt is  
smacked straight-up on the world,  
balanced  
between a rock and a hard breast  
of the primordial woman  
with fire in her throat.

# LOVE POEM

Sterling Jackson

One narrow-shouldered, would-be satyr  
Needs your love tonight.  
No longer does he leap among the reeds.  
His pipes ake now more pains to carve;  
His plaintive voice is seldom heard at all.

Young vines impede his progress,  
Rushes lash.  
Tumescent roots upset his unsure steps  
As Spring strides boldly by.

And the pool wherein he used to gaze to find  
Among the floating flowers his youthful face  
Reflects a wizened shadow, seeking love,  
Or grace,

Or a lyric voice to beckon, Lethe-light  
To touch him home again.

# Stump for President John Hulse

The presidential candidate said in his speech to corporate America, “To all you CEO’s out there all you have to do is break down and give your people a raise. Why do you think of your employees in terms of cost instead of assets to be developed. They need the money more than you do. If it means that you have to build a smaller mansion, take fewer tax-free vacations, God knows they only get two weeks a year, if they’re lucky. And God help help them if they get sick. Sell the third Mercedes before you cut their medical benefits. Your employees are all driving to work in used cars that have over 120,000 miles on them. What are you thinking of? What makes you treat people so horribly? That’s all I have to say about that.”

JOSHUA,

THE BRIGHT KID

Godfrey Green

Little Joshua, striving steadily  
through words and numbers,  
page after page, he doggedly proceeds;  
sometimes hoarsely calling words  
in his corner with furrowed brow.  
He'll look at you with his cat eyes  
and teasing smile—grinning like a monkey.  
You come to help him, but can merely say  
lean on my arm, hear a voice,  
feel a hand of support when the  
words and numbers overflow your brain.  
The quick tears spurt, the stamping foot,  
the pencil hurled. Over quickly.  
The work, the smile again.  
A new word, a new idea he snatches at.  
Child to whom I gave my message;  
I gave my cool balms, my pulsing palm;  
I fashioned a frame to build upon,  
a scaffolding for you to mount.  
Good-bye, smart, bright-eyed kid, good luck.  
May you never stop climbing.

high roller

sydney anderson

I long to see you sitting again  
cigarette in hand  
walkman on the table

I want to be able to walk up behind you  
rest my hands on your shoulders  
lean my head next to your face

I long to have my cheek near yours  
not touching  
but so close  
that I could still feel your warmth  
your desire

our skin wouldn't touch  
but I would still feel the rush  
from your presence

# Cheating Death

Annie Montfort

I feel as though I am cheating death,  
And with every day I go on living,  
Someone is dying  
So I can save my soul for another day,  
Another hour,  
Another minute.  
And I don't know why this happens,  
Just that the guilt of my salvation  
Hangs on their death  
Like drool from a beast's tongue.  
The bitter drool pumps through my veins  
And pounds in my brain, which wonders  
Why not me?  
Why do I deserve to go on while others stop?  
Stop.  
It's not their choice, and I can't stop it.  
I can only feel the guilt  
Because my salvation is only saved in life,  
And I want to cheat death.



Finished

Christopher Eck

We are never, even when we write “The End”  
after costumed melodrama, go to the coat check  
all that  
we still have something more because  
damn

I look good on paper  
and you look good on sky (or grass)  
so what’s the problem with yin and yang  
on a Saturday evening with the popcorn popped?

Like cakewalk, do I enjoy the ride  
more or having ridden, having braved the bridges  
and rubbery chasms, climbed and filled balloons,  
not finished, but certainly over like

A single light from a firefly  
fades into the atmosphere like  
smoke?

# If I Ever See Another Girl

Jamel Poole

If I ever see another girl,  
Pushing a stroller all alone,  
A girl with no help in the world,  
And the father of her child is totally gone.

If I ever see another girl asking if she can borrow a dime,  
I think I'm going to lose my mind,  
I'm mad, where's dad? he should have had,  
The sense to know the child would grow and be so sad.

If I ever see another girl with a tear-streaked face,  
Struggling to live from place to place,  
With no job, no love, no one, no home,  
And the father of her child is totally gone.

If I ever see another girl,  
Trying her best to mask the pain,  
Catching a bus and praying to beat the rain,  
Won't be too soon if I never see another girl.

If I ever see another girl, I will lose control,  
It really hurts my soul, 'cause I already know,  
That the girl I see is in misery,  
Won't be too soon if I never see another girl.

EVEN MY  
Dan Lukiv

Even my six-year-old  
Sits in tall grass  
And paints her toenails.

Sponge

Yosh

the wake and wander of present sheets  
will hope and fun for one small night  
and break upon the new touch floor  
a tingle, to and fray.

lay.

down.

feel my splash  
and soak...

months

daily

Infant Michael needs no training to show  
joy in facial change, gurgles for pleasure,  
complains when hungry, frets when overfull  
fumes to help him vent some gas.

He simulates the mast of comedy, smiles  
with toothless glee, screams with down-  
drawn lips to display annoyance, hollers  
if no one's near to lift him from his crib.

Requires silence when he lies asleep,  
wakes colicky to be walked at three A.M.  
His high chair is a throne from which he rules,  
rejects all blandishments from slaves

Seizes anything in reach to suck or chew  
or spit into a nearby face.  
No wonder grateful parents celebrate  
when Michael reaches two.

poem for children

daddy's home

Rock-a-bye baby  
on the tree top  
when the wind blows  
the cradle will rock

and down comes baby and cradle and rock

When the wind blows the cradle will rock  
like the wheat in the fields  
and the clouds on the rock

When the wind blows  
through the lines on your face  
the cradle will rock  
on the tree top  
where you pray for lightning thinder and rain  
to crash you down just like a rock  
that goes thump in the night in the mud and the rain

Once upon a time a long time ago  
there was a cradle in the night  
there was a rock and there was you  
in the rain and the ccradle and the night

**children  
churches  
& daddies**

Viewing Scenic California

Eric Dean

I have traveled  
All over California.  
I started in Los Angeles  
Where I popped  
Out of a surprised woman  
Who gave me  
A wonderful man.  
I stayed in Los Angeles  
During the holocaust  
Of my dreams. I  
Journeyed to Bakersfield  
Where I met the Incubus.  
We had a 3 year relationship  
In which I learned to fuck.  
I journeyed to San Luis Obispo  
And saw angels and trumpets  
Declaring somebody who was  
Visiting that day. I went up  
To Monterey and found God; she was  
Hiding under a rock, but  
As I reached for her, she  
Leaped out with the tide.  
My journey has ended up here  
In San Francisco, where I  
Have learned that everybody  
Loves a fag. Someday I wish  
To go home, but I only have  
Money for a one way trip.

Prominon

Pete Gholewinski

No more wine or bread  
Headlines of insanity  
Marguerite plays the violin

a somber vibrato  
falling  
from our balcony  
with autumn leaves  
to the crowded boulevard  
unheeded

For a moment  
the boulevard  
the town itself  
this sunset and empty wine glass  
the violin and newspaper  
our crisp white tablecloth  
pulse  
with a nausea  
of some madman's creation.



VIEW FROM A CHURCH WINDOW

Roger Taber

There's a thrill of blossom  
on the old tree,  
a greeny-white chirrup of noise  
bouncing gently, like  
a ball in child  
hands

Every nuance of creation  
about the old tree,  
tuned to perfection; you and me  
shaking our heads at confetti  
coming down, like  
acid rain

A hymn to life,  
such beauty!  
Tiny wafers of noise  
tongued lightly  
at the kissing gate  
over there

Here, a dim view  
of immortality  
as we pass our seasons by  
grown deaf  
to each  
leaf

**children  
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# The Antichrist of Vegetables

PJ Boomer

I am the antichrist of vegetables  
me, my friends, and I  
We are what isn't good for you-  
feelings and dreams to poison  
your body,  
ideas and thoughts to poison  
your soul.  
The brussel sprouts of an America  
where bean sprouts and tofu  
will make you whole.  
Vegetables, mindless,  
their purpose in life to be  
picked from the garden  
peeled, cooked and eaten.  
Vegetables, chemically altered  
to look and to think and to feel  
as the rest of them do.  
Not for us the fashion shows or  
catalogue shopping.

**scarsnotepand**

We toy with ideas like anarchy,  
supporting revolution.  
We have no catechism, no trinity.  
Sure, there might be a god  
But what or who is he?  
Yet at least we aren't deluded,  
cooked like other vegetables,  
leached of color and of strength,  
luckily we were uprooted  
before we could be gathered up,  
processed and molded, soon to be food.  
We weren't fed on pesticides,  
our minds unclouded by chemicals  
soaked up from a superficial society.  
We are the antichrists of vegetables,  
plucked apart from the rest of the bed.  
We survive together, staying alive,  
refusing to be eaten with the rest of  
the salad.

**children  
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