

1976

The Proof

Russell Edson

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Recommended Citation

Edson, Russell. "The Proof." *The Iowa Review* 7.4 (1976): 91-91. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.2122>

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a head that does not settle
in the cup of my palms like cloudy water
a head I might strike
on the smog-brown backside of night
and set the blue tongues singing under my soup

The Proof / Russell Edson

He looks from a window, leaning his elbows on a windowsill; and he is like the head of a turtle peering from the body-house . . .

Then suddenly, before he can know, the windowsill goes soft; his elbows dent down as if into fresh dough.

The walls begin to swell into melting breasts and drooping eyelids that slide to the floor.

The ceiling weighs down, and the light fixture is the umbilicus of an extended belly; a pregnancy smiling the happy, if not foolish, revelation.

The windows sag into closing ovals, as though lips of people whistling whose lips are becoming earth even before their songs are done.

Out of the tracings of windows and doors, the corners of rooms, that shimmer on the surface he emerges as from a pudding . . .

The Shuttle / Russell Edson

I think of a village where the dying are put in automobiles . . . Where the dying slowly lift from the ground in automobiles, rising over thatched rooves . . .

. . . The old man begins to feel a little better. He yawns almost refreshed—yes, quite refreshed; he's getting younger!

The automobile changes into a four-poster bed.

He becomes a little boy sailing through the clouds in a crib.

And then, what seems a spot no bigger than a distant bird, develops into a tiny village, like those seen when traveling in snow-covered mountains.