

1979

# Not Here

Victor Trelawny

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview>

Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Trelawny, Victor. "Not Here." *The Iowa Review* 10.4 (1979): 23-24. Web.  
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.2515>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Review by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact [lib-ir@uiowa.edu](mailto:lib-ir@uiowa.edu).

Not Here · *Victor Trelawny*

The laundry fidgets on the rope-line.  
All month the wind gusted only enough  
To shake my brother's blue bib  
From the wooden clothespins.  
We had to drive all night to get home.  
I still don't feel like I'm here,  
Because it's not the same: the grass needs mowing,  
My father's work gloves stick up like puppets  
On the handles of the wheelbarrow.

The hose sleeps like a snake in the poplar.  
In the swimming pool five colors of fish  
Swim through the bright heat.  
I spray the water with my thumb  
Over my feet in the yellow-green grass  
That crackles like fire when I step into it.  
Everything burns slow that doesn't flame,  
Like the compost heap my father and I pitchforked  
Into the wheelbarrow this spring.  
He said, *Let me feel your muscle,*  
And then could hardly tilt it up himself.  
I sail a peach toward the road.

In the mailbox, a load of mail.  
I run back with so much good news for my mother.  
Except she's crying again.  
I don't know why now. From the porch  
I hear her crying into the phone.  
Maybe my father finally came back  
And left a number on the pad.  
His spade still sticks into the garden:  
The gourds are shrunken heads,  
The tomato-vines are like winter  
Twisted around their stakes.

Tomorrow when I climb up the hill  
I will call the dog again—  
Or maybe he has gone off somewhere too.  
Then I would not want to find him.  
The window nearest to the swingset has been broken.  
Inside the drawers are all pulled out  
And the mattress turned over.