1997

Honeymoon and Greybeard Loon

Mark Wasserman

Follow this and additional works at: http://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview

Part of the Creative Writing Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.4864

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.
Mark Wasserman

Honeymoon and Greybeard Loon

Hypnotist weather again, my love. Building-tops bud through a topsoil of fog and we’re lost at home. Before your eyes open, before sleep drains from your face, I will pray for a kinder awakening. I must. Ah, to think I used to breathe hope like lighter fluid . . .

And the rooftop cats are staring back and puckering their paws.

Trust only the temporal. Retain your stubs anyway. Gray will stay. Our fog is but the sea grown curious, nosing ashore in white surgeon mask, white surgeon fingers.

Quick: in case we’re blotted out utterly, this is what I knew of how to live: we must forgive and then forgive again. In yesterday’s drizzle my briefcase went mis-shapen. I have put it beneath my mattress for the next. Good-bye pretty city,

diorama of all my dreams. I shall wander you no more. Comes the white stole of heaven draping the church shoulders in dainty death.

And the rooftop cats are staring back and puckering their paws.
The church sighs like a junky bride
stoned at her own wedding, wreathed
in white madness. By now the spindrift
has reached our downtown, bequeathing all
a milky calm. *Thought is a vapor.*
Gray will stay, my love. Look:

Two birds like lost math problems . . .

I've always known you, Old Whitesmoke,
Old Deathbreath. Come disappear
me then. The fog-horn betrays you each morning

like a ghost blowing riffs on his oboe.

Beneath the Bay Bridge a freshly-shaved hobo
is getting early foot to Portland.

Something must come of it. Something
clean, and alabaster as a baby dove; precious too,
like baby teeth not yet uprooted

by the treacherous grit of this world. Who knows
where those teeth go? Some we tied
to doorknobs and slammed. Some to kites
and released. In any case, they were
confiscated. Remember.

And the rooftop cats are glaring back
and daring me to jump.

I’ll say it: years accrete like plaque and we
were never briefed. Wake up now, darling. Tell
how it all lactates backwards or I’ll take
the cats at their word.
Deep in the city's ribs a hidden cable clangs its tambourine-song like a lost troupe of tin men. Alive! Those baby teeth are coming down on pillow-case parachutes, snowing onto a Thursday dull. They're seeding the streets, the tops of antique shops. Our gums lightly twitch. Go ask anyone: No one can know what will grow.