

SQUEEZE

At 11 am mail drop
received three copies
of a good little magazine
from Colorado with
one of my poems
printed in it.
Read my poem
& all the others,
then mine again.
My ego is always
sizing up the competition
& trying to squeeze
just a little out front.
Embarrasses the hell
out of the rest of me.

FOR THE TEACHER

When I was a boy
Mom made it a priority
to teach me to be honest.
Today I'm cash register
honest, but that inner,
deeper honesty has come
hard for me. I was an
expert at telling the truth
on someone when I was
drinking, even to the point
of destroying friendships.
I saw my sins in others
but didn't have the courage
to point to myself.
Several hours before she
died last December Mom
told me she loved me
that I was the best son
a mother ever had,
preparing, I believe, to
release me, trusting that
her teaching had taken hold.

MADE UP

25 years ago Doug
Blazek asked me
when are you going
to make up your mind?
Implying I couldn't
do both. Paint & write
poetry. Those of you
that see him tell him
it is done. Made up.
My last painting
hangs half finished &
untouched since 1991.

READING

Left Tom's creative writing
class with sharp pain in
my gut. I'd been invited
to read along with Ann
& Luke. I read last, rushing
seven poems that I trusted.
Right now I'm not sure why
I rushed them.
Too much coffee,
lack of time, competition?
Whatever, my swollen ego
felt cheated & stabbed me.

LET IT RIPEN

There's a poem waiting
but I can't trigger
it. Used to release
it with a stiff
drink or two.
Now I'm learning
to be patient,
let it ripen.
When it's ready
I'll be there.