

CRUISING WITH THE EDITOR
(REMEMBERING MARVIN MALONE)

I guess,
for argument's sake
you could say
the first time I met Marvin Malone
was during a Caribbean cruise
somewhere back in the mid-fifties.

The liner had sailed from the Mexican port
of Veracruz late the night before—
after much revelry.

Next morning, as the eager prow
aimed us toward our first port of call,
pre-Castro Havana,
I was swiftly circling the deck
in a vain attempt to quiet my pounding head.

Finally realizing that a more radical
remedy than sun-shot sea breeze
was needed to cure the hangover,
I headed for the bar.

Two Martians draped in what seemed to be
strings of blinking Christmas tree lights
& sporting stainless-steel sun visors
brushed past me as I entered.

After downing half a double Bloody Mary,
my eyes became accustomed
to the dim mauve lighting of the lounge,
& I noticed that Ernie Hemingway
was sitting at one of the round chrome tables
in the company of a serious-looking chap
I did not recognize.

Wishing to greet my old friend,
I took my drink over to their table,
at which time he introduced me
to his companion:

"This is Marvin Malone, editor of editors," he said.

Marvin Malone's handshake was firm,
as he cautioned, "Never forget, what seems seamless
is never without seams."

Yes, I have never forgotten this most insightful
of all editors' remarks.

So, as far as I can remember,
this was my first meeting with the esteemed
editor Marvin Malone.

The two Martians—I never saw those buggers again.

—Richard M. West

Bainbridge Island, WA

POETRY
(for Marvin Malone)

Reading the really dangerous stuff is like
sweating
bullets and nitroglycerin in Death Valley.

Writing it is like John Dillinger whittling
a block
of balsa in a jail cell in Crown Point, Indiana.

Publishing it requires more than a small press,
it takes a tempered mind that can sort through
the noise

in a temple of drunken monkeys and come up with
a few poems that sound suspiciously like
literature.

—Gene Mahoney

Vineyard Haven, MA