

JAMES C. KILGORE

Not Too Much to Carry

(February 2nd)

I pack hurriedly;
I don't know why:
I have come to love the people
 who heard my voice
 in deep baritone pain.
I am careful with my flowers
 and the cards that filled the snowy days.
For me they are Christmas and New Year's
 and Valentine presents.
For me they are Thanksgiving.

I search the sky for the sun;
It is in hiding,
But beyond the gray screen,
Light blooms,
Scenting the quiet room.

The Warrensville Heights Black Oak has been a companion
 for forty days and forty nights.
She has stood by me through the flood.

She has always been there when I needed her:
I have compared my surgery to hers,
 the cold which screamed against her black chest
 to the pain which caused my black trunk to tremble;
I have seen her endure the terrible lashes
 of a bleak North American winter.



She stands there now, near the parking lot;
I pause to say good-bye.
I tell her I'm leaving,
I tell her I'll be back to see her,
That some warm day I'll pack a lunch
And spend at least an afternoon
 at her feet when she is young again.