

1981

## The Minstrels

A. Pence

*Denison University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Pence, A. (1981) "The Minstrels," *Exile*: Vol. 27 : No. 1 , Article 13.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile/vol27/iss1/13>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the English at Denison Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Exile by an authorized editor of Denison Digital Commons.

# The Minstrels

Lung

A. Pence

Just past the highway  
deep in the woods of Ohio, where ice  
turns and folds,  
snow has found its own gray pocket  
the roots are bare  
over in the clearing  
is the fallowed place  
of the minstrels

In this gathering  
the earth is groping  
the wind is at peace  
and buried away, packed beneath  
the wet-black humus, below  
the shifting of snails and seeds  
there is the sound.

I heard it only once--  
when the sun was on my face  
when ice cupped the morning  
and the lines on my palms were thick  
and long.

It could have been my foot  
scraping my sole on a pebble  
or blood rushing in the shell of my ear  
but the sound was of an instrument  
turning and gleaning under there  
it was like a lung filling,  
pumping--taking the deep deep woods  
into itself  
First, the intake  
then the release, a letting-go,  
the slow slow mutter  
the spindle set loose  
and music rising from  
out the ground.