

2022

The Barber Brothers

Chad Trevitte

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.bridgewater.edu/bc_philomathean

Recommended Citation

Trevitte, Chad (2022) "The Barber Brothers," *Philomathean*: Vol. 1, Article 14.

Available at: https://digitalcommons.bridgewater.edu/bc_philomathean/vol1/iss1/14

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals and Campus Publications at BC Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Philomathean by an authorized editor of BC Digital Commons. For more information, please contact rlowe@bridgewater.edu.

The Barber Brothers

By Chad Trevitte

Ken Wallace
Lynn Garden, 1977

He looked like Gordon Lightfoot with his beard—
“which suits him well,” Mom said, “to cover that
rough mug”—and tinted glasses kept his eyes
from scaring me while propped up in his chair.
For reading he had *Vogue* and a dog-eared
Godfather paperback, with a stray cat
that kept the mice away and chased the flies.
Paying me bubble gum for sweeping hair,
he joined my father in a haggling session
after the second break-in at his shop.
“Not bad, John D, but for my peace of mind
I’d still prefer the stainless Smith and Wesson.
Here’s a Browning if you’ll take a swap.”
Sundown, you better take care if I find...

Newt Wallace
Five Points, 1978

Newt looked more like Robert Shaw (*The Sting*)
with dyed black hair. Seeing his blurred blue tats,
I asked him what they said. “No need to know,”
he snipped. I once combed through his comics stash.
Under Jughead, a blonde in a G-string
said *Oni* and held a glossy pair of tits.
His shop smelled like Clubman, Wildroot, Pinaud,
Pall Malls, and years of sunbaked cigar ash.
He died alone in his back room. I’d seen
it on my trips with Dad: a rumpled cot,
a Zenith set, and empties on the floor.
His toilet reeked of unflushed piss. “He’d been
too drunk to move,” Mom murmured, “like as not.”
His shop was turned into a vintage store.

Claude Wallace
Highlands, 1985

Claude was an older, heavier Robert Burns
with mutton chops and a thin pompadour.
“Mohawks for free” was one of his old tricks
to take the burden off the summer heat.
Unlike his brothers, he was on good terms
with Mom, and folks would line up at his door.
His chest hair held a small gold crucifix.
He touched it as Dad staggered to his seat.
“Yessir, I’m proud to say it’s my fourth year

sober. My wife laid down the law. I learned
to leave the stuff alone. But all the same,
I can still taste it now...that ice cold beer.”
Smiling at me, he bowed his head—then turned
his conversation to the football game.

Chad Trevitte is a writer and educator from Harrisonburg, Virginia, who taught literature at Bridgewater College