

THE PROSE POEM: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

Volume 4 | 1995

Dad's Home Peter Desy

© Providence College

The author(s) permits users to copy, distribute, display, and perform this work under the following conditions: (1) the original author(s) must be given proper attribution; (2) this work may not be used for commercial purposes; (3) the users may not alter, transform, or build upon this work; (4) users must make the license terms of this work clearly known for any reuse or distribution of this work. Upon request, as holder of this work's copyright, the author(s) may waive any or all of these conditions.

The Prose Poem: An International Journal is produced by
The Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress)
for the Providence College Digital Commons.
<http://digitalcommons.providence.edu/prosepoems/>

Peter Desy

DAD'S HOME

My dead father woke up living in the bedroom next to mine. Nothing had changed in twenty years; I had never grieved for him, so when he came down to breakfast we said hello in a perfunctory way and he fried two eggs before going to work. He said it was nothing like you'd expect on the other side, no Jesus or anything like that, so he came home here, to the house on Indiana Street, back to his desk job, back to be 'nothing but a goddam paycheck' for his family again, who, I told him, had all left, and his wife had died and I stayed on to be an alcoholic like him. He said to watch my mouth and I told him I was a college professor for ten years now, a publisher of articles, an instructor of youth. So what's new? I asked.

It's an exponential growth industry without a market, galaxies of crap and trash there, oppressive, like the Henry Ford Museum. A near-infinity of cars, chariots, carts, socks, bones, capes, unguent jars—goods substantial and insubstantial, things strange and things familiar.

It's annoying, though. You *know* everything, and so fast that at first it's kind of transcendent, but you soon reduce it all to a few principles, like a three-note musical scale. So much for intelligibility and the empirical spirit you subscribe to.

Well, the flavors you taste, a thousand simultaneously if you like. Your tongue tip's a million buds. All that. But then there are the vast abstractions, just like Plato said. No one can put it all together, though—all that multiplicity! The juicy 'world' and the sculptural beauty of the Forms. Too much tension for my inelastic nature. So much for your little-islands-of-order-in-the-sea-of-chaos' kind of thinking.

The farther you go in, the more light plays tricks on you. You think you're heading toward the source, but there's a confusion

of brightness everywhere. And everything's on the verge of ecstasy, but whatever moves doesn't get completed. It made me want to do something ugly, like paint a rainbow with a broom. So here I am, not ready to take any more questions. I think I'll have tuna for lunch, no salt, and just a little water.