

or like Kafka's artist  
charge admission,  
I could minimize  
bread alone,  
I could stitch a life from this  
or call it art. I  
could haul my scoured ribs  
past politics and find wine  
in an empty belly's mockery  
of government. I could side  
with such romance  
or really, I could tell you  
that I live in Los Angeles  
weigh two-thirty-five and just  
shared a mushroom pizza  
with a lady on Vermont Avenue.  
We had five bottles of Bud  
and now I'm going for some rum,  
Bacardi light, with Coke and limes.  
Cuba Libres. Sausages for breakfast.  
Ah, my friend, did you really swallow  
all that bitter deprivation?

At the Artiste Bar  
the barmaid's mouth sets  
against laughter, she  
talks through her hands  
and her quick fingertips  
suture her smile --  
she can't forget those missing teeth --

not even later, I wonder, her arms and legs  
spidered over some guy's back  
eyes wild or quiet in penetration  
what shape has her mouth then?

-- Tony Quagliano

Los Angeles, CA

NOTICE:::NOTICE:::NOTICE:::NOTICE:::NOTICE:::NOTICE

In the last issue (Wormwood:40), the name of Ron Koertge was omitted (page 126) after the following poems:

"In The Hollywood Deli"

"The Burglar"

"Lazarus" and

"Lately" ... thus it appears that they were

authored by Gerald Locklin. Both poets have been exceptionally tolerant of the editor's error. We are re-running the mis-credited poems and adding three more inimitable Koertge poems. Turn the page: