

My Orange Sherbert Dog

Why do you lay there
Staring at me with your melting eyes

Do you wonder
why I care what you look like
why I sculpture the tip of your left ear
so carefully with my silver spoon
why I take such pains
to hollow the curve
between your soggy orange belly
and the tan stoneware dish
why I bother to wipe away the liquid
streaking from your eyes

The answer, my friend,
to all your wondering
is simple:

the more beautiful you are
the better you taste.

-- James R. Scrimgeour

Normal IL

LIZARD LITTLE OLD MAN
stoned on fireheat

you wriggled your turquoise pattern tail
around Keith's shoulder

we were drinking seder wine & eating matzos with honey
under the tall leaning cottonwood.

freezing dusk. all thru the fields of
sage & bitterbrush

all the lizards were going to sleep
except you.

little splayfoot stoned man
pumping your yellow ribs

& you leapt around our circle, under Arlene's
boots, flicking your black eyes nervously

& grabbed & clung on the firestone,
stoned gray skull leaning

into the flame, we stumbled
shouting up -- you stamped your foot

& hurried out into the brown cold
hunting owl calling

you with a story of the strange beasts who make
fires hotter than the sun

I shook my grandfather's hand
"Well, I'll see you in the other world," he said.

I nodded.
"Yes, on the mountains in the other world."

My grandfather shook his head very slowly.
"There are no mountains in the other world," he said.

-- John Oliver Simon

Berkeley CA

on judgement

in a place like this, there are bound to be pirates and
elevator operators. there are bound to be liars, old folks
at home, selfish people, sunshine people, idiots, cartoon-
ists, parachutists, third basemen, evangelists, politicians,
marxists, splinter removers, scissor sharpeners, greens-
keepers, miracle believers, ice suckers, social workers,
lone rangers, strangers, fire eaters, good humor men, people
who are under the false impression that their houses are
mansions, people who are quite sure they must be the dumbest,
cotton candy vendors, lumberjacks, neurasthenics, spelunkers,
little wooden people, soy bean eaters, palsied people, proph-
ets, conspirators against the boss, sub-contractors, false
teeth people terrified of apples, swimmers of the english
channel, climbers of mount everest, strippers, trickers,
hookers, librarians, exhibitionists, carpenters, firemen,
yo-yo manufacturers, sex-emanating receptionists, murderers,
stowaways, hi-jackers, incompetents, whiners, skin-divers,
gypsies, bubble gum freaks, bearded ladies, midgets, pantied
men in front of mirrors, cheats, word-keepers, blood-soaked
soldiers, aviators, yodelers, bee keepers, name callers,
insect studiers, ticket takers, nose pickers, nose job
doctors, junkies, smugglers, burglars, burlap bag makers,
cellists, mumblers to themselves walking down fifth avenue,