

Foundation

Woodcut by Scott Morris

Comparison/Contrast

My fantasies and poems share My life but rearrange the parts To fit their different schemes.

The poems distance words and care. They photograph the mind and heart; They freeze a frame on scenes.

But fantasies defy the pace That life insists upon. They leap Beyond the edge. They write

The scenes and dialogues which place The actors closer to the steep Descent to pain and flight.

Clara C. Wood

How old are we when we are born?

And how old when we die?

These questions - they may sound forlorn

But so does the question - Why?

I don't know what to think of life or life to think of me I only know that what I am is what I'll always be.

If you ever ask the question - "Why?" and think the answers are too few Then take a look down deep inside The answers come from you.

Decisions - seldom necessary Already they've been made The design of a house is finished Before the foundation's laid.

Robert Hopkins

THE VAULT

Deep in a black cranial vault where skittering gray ideas track the dust and shadow-cramped corners, the unsculptured slumps blankly in chains. Screams spiral the dungeon stairs, beyond the moat of pike and gar — work is beginning in grim chambers.

What mayhem to choose tonight?
The rack, Iron Maiden, screws?
Tooling my trade on this vague head and body, red knout singing,
I, Torquemada's quill,
curl skin into seared scrolls,
disfiguring, refiguring,

shaping, creating, until the iron cools and stink dissolves to crevices; the white flesh splits like shellfish, whole.

The poem slips the gray manacles and bolts shrieking for the steps and door, bounding to the blue air of the world.

Ken Chamlee

The Courage To Keep

It will shatter at a suggestion.
Break at a glance.
Treat it like fine crystal.
Guard it with life and soul.
Protect it with love.

He says it is mine,
But I must give it back.
You see, I do not have the courage to keep it.
Nor does it truly belong to me—
This heart in the palm of my hand.

Cheri Chester

Innate

Paradise has been locked behind a door Untouching reality's cold, clean glass But swallowing our breath of life's true lore.

Chatters chirp in rhythm, heaven's pure mass. Each question brings us to our sacred knees. Young eyes are brighter, age does not surpass The entity children see from church balconies.

Suzanne Peterson