



Pheonix

Gilbert Abraham
Staff Writer

Each day I feel my wear.
I feel the oxidation
slowly burning me from outside
and within to ash
I feel wings then form
in the grey silence of the still
I feel the quills materialization
the slick raw wet afterbirth
and the loftness of the sky
that bore me
beneath my wings again.

Have a short story, poem, drawing, or other work you'd like to share? Submit it to the Lance and it could be published here in the Off The Wall section!

Subit your work at the Communications Office TODAY!

Crumbling Land

Matthew Stucke
Assistant Editor

I look around me...
Crumbling land:
Crooks and thieves and ugly things
Crooked wishes, fading dreams
Willing madness waiting brings
Windy willows shriek aloud
Witches servants all about
Sentinels watching closely
Seeing eyes of glory
Set the course for homeward stories
There we'll find our sheltered young
Theaters strum our favorite song
Thousands of years, but still just one
Offerings brought to praise the dawn
Often, she's the only one
Offended, alone, I now return
Allies now all but forgot
Alliance has no meaning
Alpine planes with snowy dust
Follow me all, bring your lust

Anniversary

Matthew Phelps
Contributing Writer

Beside the tent where the clipped lawn turns to thick pasture

he pinches a stalk of long grass at its base between his thumb and forefinger,
pulls the grass and shows me the collected seed in his hand.

This is how the turkeys do it with their beaks.
He is still a hunter, though this year he has stopped chasing the big game.
*I'm too old now for anything but the birds
that come to my yard and offer themselves for my taking.*

I listen to his breathing that is like the guttural growling of a bear.

The rumbling from deep within frightens me.
He is dying, not in the sense that each of us are,
but in the way that old people should not have to.

I hear his wife telling my father that his heart has been funny for some time.

Today, on their fiftieth anniversary, they have collected what is left of their wedding party.

I see his death in his wife and daughter,
in the way they watch him
knowing he has been in bed two days
and arose this morning with energy borrowed from a pool that cannot be replenished.

I see it in the way he looks out over his land,
in the way he speaks to old friends as though he might not again.

I was born here, you know.
I follow his gaze to where the afternoon sun casts grasping tree shadows against white clapboards.
A barn swallow swoops in and out of its nest in the eaves of his house.