

Quill & Ink

ON THE EVENT OF GRANVILLE'S BURNING. DECEMBER 10, 1988

Post psych exam
Coming across the causewalk
I notice fire engines
And black smoke rising
Off the roof of Granville.
People surround
In an anxious crowd.
Something white lies on the dead grass
A stretcher? White sheet?
Coming closer I realize - no,
Just a boat overturned on the bank.
I reprimand myself
For jumping to silly conclusions.
Still, smoke rises
In a thick black fog
And a swarm of huddled onlookers
Moves from one cluster
To the next
(Like a bag lady in search of a meal)
Hoping to come up with the makings
Of some plausible story
Why? How?
Still smoke rises
Into the cluttered air
And firefighters,
In their yellow padded suits and
Ash-marked faces, search for
Signs of life left behind
(In tanks and cages).
Later,
From my third floor window,
Noises, voices, drift upwards
With the smell of smoke
That still looms heavy in the air.
Swarms of questioning faces still
Huddle arm in arm,
Parents waiting to take their children
Home for the Holidays.
One Granvillite says to another,
"What do you want for Christmas?"
The other boy replies,
With only a half-sad laugh,
"New underwear?"

JENNIFER HITCH

ASHES

I am Semele.
All you have left of me
is a pile of soot

(And you ask me why
my smile isn't the same)

JILL STRICKLIN-GEORGE

MOVEMENT

1
a strange outcry
issued forth by the trees
shots ring out from behind the grassy knoll
the leaves are scattered
and banned from further assembly
the buildings breathe
and lustre
'til the morning comes
2
serving a higher purpose
on a plastic tray
all last hopes have gone bad
3
please, don't change
hints of violence in your eyes
expressed with fire
my love is a hole in the wall
please don't draw the curtains
i should rather drink boiling water
than to stand beside you in line
as if nothing had happened

4
we are less afraid if we
speak about ourselves
collectively
all recklessness
however opaque
is sharply focused
upon you

5
my pockets are
bottomless
to your hands
my mouth is
emptiness
to your ears
your heart is
impervious
to the one thing
on my mind

7
Which end is the wrong end of a gun anyway?

AWOL3

UNTITLED

down the hall i sometimes hear
the hysterical laughter of a
caged hyena or the psychotic
voice of nellie olson or was that
the sewer rat ?
i often need to remind myself
that this is an institution of
learning
and not the hecklers
heaven we dream about, but then
again i don't heckle
it ain't in my nature.
arey
uoes
tabl
ishe
dyet
and are you responsible?
a song is drifting down the
hall and some guy with a red
guitar is claiming to have the
truth. we thought we found the
real truth last weekend in
the bottom of a bottle but
the worm must have eaten it
before we could retrieve it.

LISA GALL

EPICUREAN BLUES

1
You got angry at me the other day
when we were talking about
life after death and i said to you
"Cut the shit, when you die, damnit,
you die." You said a lot of mean things
to me that day. You said all I do is
sit around and write depressing poetry
that doesn't make any sense. It wasn't
very nice, so I started to think about it.

2
Well, I thought about it. What's with you
anyway Ms. Bonnie Blue Bonnet?
Why do you believe in Knights in shining
armour and love at first sight?
Why do you think there's a chunk of
gold at the end of every stinking rainbow?

3
It doesn't matter. Eternally moving, our
cheeks continue to flap in the wind as
we run like scared bunnies past aqua
blue houses with window panes lined in
pink. My nose is huge and shiny and
I'm beginning to realize that it probably
always will be. I am not a cartoon
character. At least that's what I
keep telling myself.

4
Blessed and eternal is my rasping breath.
I am like a wet log on an open fire.
I burn, I grow cold, I cannot be used again.
You never needed warmth anyway, cuddled up
cozy inside your fantasy world.
Like an ice cube on a gas burner,
your heat melts into all that

I am.

RUTH ECKLES