

*Glenca Holloway*

## THE STAR SALESMAN

You must forgive my flippant prose style,  
It's native to this territory's scene  
Like mini-calculators, cabs and booze.

I sprawl the king-size hotel bed and stare:  
My all-wool alter ego hangs alert,  
Fresh-pressed and waiting for the morning's cue.  
My forty dollar name-designer tie  
Most likely has a spot that must be sponged  
Before I sleep. My Gucci shoes are shined  
For each rehearsed approach. But there's no role  
For sweet success tomorrow. Or next week.

A dozen times a month I play this lead,  
Instead of hotdogs, dine on haute cuisine.  
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Our customers aren't clapping for our number.  
However primed and powdered or threadbare  
They make it sound, their script says NO, a word  
Of lead and ice that lodges in soft parts  
Beneath my vest, attacking gourmet spoils.  
(I'm sure you note the comic undertones  
That permeate this neo-classic farce.)

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Lapels well tailored with sincerity,  
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CHICAGO: FIRST LADY OF THE LAKE

She moved leanly through Indian twilight,  
shabby and unmet, slogging through swamps,  
trailing her long skirts over skunk cabbage  
and mud. She stumbled on shores that bullied her  
with dares and promises none of the others heard.

She lay on the flats in bosomy youth, gazing  
blueward— high hollow blue, pale-seamed  
with wet blue, cerulean and grayed indigo—  
seasoned shades priming the canvas  
waiting for a subject, waiting

for her to quiet her urgent hunger, waiting  
for her to find a wintersmith husband and breed  
a breed taller and stubbornner than the emptiness.  
She drew a line in the black dirt,  
she, without first-glance beauty,  
without dowry or lineage—a razorish termagant  
on Tuesday, demure as dimity on Wednesday,  
racy as red sequins on Saturday,  
Sunday-caring through the long rains  
gone white and heavy on her head, an enigma—  
fine figure, unfathomable sum.

After her wedding for better and worse,  
feast and fire, splinter and guilt,  
she took her time with the art of ladyhood,  
more earned than learned,  
roughing-in with charcoal,  
handling mixture and brushes her way,  
using the flattering, fuming, prodding blues  
waiting for their match, icing and steaming,  
waiting for her to model her rising brood  
with the back of her hand,  
to teach them to pose substance on air and water,  
add the warm colors to the palette, and at last  
to put in perspective millions of highlights  
framing the time-stretched palimpsest of azure.

Baobab means upside down in Swahili

*Glenn Holloway*

AN AFRICAN SYNOPSIS: THE BAOBAB TREE

Morning:

A ragged inkblot against the sun  
erupts like a geyser into crazed sky.  
Zigzag in slow motion  
a black quill  
returns to tangled branches of calligraphy.  
Limned roots that grew bark  
and aspired to heaven  
lurch upward to await the twilight embrace  
of winged exclamations who won it.

Afternoon:

Berserk lines on vellum glare  
spell an ancient theme  
of heathen heat blanching the horizon.  
Daily elephants edit details;  
warped shade smudges lion printing.

Evening:

Reunited on the moon's page  
birds and boughs compose  
cryptic verses of silence  
rising above  
the voices of the veldt howling hunger.



48 B

## ERINIA

She was wise-warm in the eyes  
although blue is a cool color.  
I recall how her eyes turned cobalt  
and live embers on coal-smoke evenings,  
how they brimmed with Christmas year-round.  
I remember clear cerulean on apple-crunch mornings  
when north winds forgot to blow.  
Her eyes were country cures—  
not the old wives' tales of Amy's or Vi's,  
squintish and skimpy, faded ash smudges  
for irises. Erinia's thicket of lashes  
defied the ages stored beneath,  
but if you made a study, you knew  
those indigo shadows were old as change or sorrow,  
holding where we were and where we were going,  
steady stakes for my wild tendrils,  
endless emollient for my pains.  
She kept all our mementos in her eyes.  
She willed them all to me.

48C

## FULL CYCLE

The spring of love leaps lightly with the season;  
It warms each day without much hope of rest.  
It wrestles nightly with our star-wrecked reason  
While every sense grows keen with greening zest.  
The summer sun ignites the waiting west,  
Outsplendored by the mirrored pair below,  
Uncooled by native nocturnes, at their crest,  
Still pulsing, pacing with a swift rondo.  
When first the fringe of fall begins to show  
As subtle as a kiss conveyed with eyes,  
Then lovers feel their time and tempo slow,  
And hide it with a hundred little lies.  
If summer shades burned deep, days will re-blue;  
Late honey-haze will light the hearth anew.



April

ANNIVERSARY: DRIVING THE OLYMPIC PENINSULA

The blue of and behind your eyes



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## THE STAR SALESMAN STAGES A DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE

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## WEATHERSCAPE

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The radio says we'll get fringes of an anticyclone  
about ten o'clock. Miles of sea have already scrubbed  
this migrant air, all the knuckles of this wind  
trying to pry open my mouth like an angry nurse  
with a dose of salts. Mixed currents tore  
their tethers from the pole, spiraled down north  
by east to harass the shutters on my windows, planting  
sand and salmon scales in wood pores. Mine  
are stinging pink with Katmai pumice and oily smoke  
from Athabaskan cookfires. My teeth grit  
glacial silt; my lungs fatten on the breath  
of rutting moose. Seal hair whips and tangles  
with my gray. This prelude cry rolls from throats  
of Tlingit fishermen, famished grizzlies, falling spruce.  
Specimen rose-trees on my lawn make no sound  
kneeling nor can I hear their breaking.  
The time is near. I know what this wind wants after  
raking the backs of guillemots, scraping up swatches  
of desiccated taiga moss, banking off centuries  
of guano and granite. No one escapes the northland.  
All the vagrant gales converge in the stoop of a hawk,  
arrowheaded by an ancient narwhal nailing me  
to the last wall until it goes down.

1st. Prize, Poets & Patrons, Chicago

OVERTURE IN BEE FLATS  
Glenn Holloway

Just like an armored knight I sally out  
To brave my gauntlet, gloved and cloaked with care.  
I still collect booty with waves of doubt  
That I'll escape another well-aimed pair  
Or more of pulsing spears injecting me  
With fire, leaving each gilded guardian less  
Her lance, a fierce and willing casualty  
Of my timorous lordship's due process.  
Perfectly programmed for serving their queen,  
They never see their jewels in my jars  
Serve sweet-toothed ladies-in waiting between  
Biscuits with butter, and apple-nut bars.  
It's worth each risk this adventurer takes  
To taste warm gems my other honey makes.



Glenna Holloway  
913 E. Bailey Rd.  
Naperville, IL 60565

5 lines

HAIKU INHERENT

Glenna Holloway

Out of wet darkness—  
the two-octave treble cry  
of a single loon.  
Night is suddenly colder  
and I, alone, am older.



December 1985

Glenna Holloway  
913 E. Bailey Rd.  
Naperville, IL 60565

166-1. WEATHERSCAPE

The radio says we'll get fringes of an aticyclone

167-2. A SURGEON'S SESTINA *In Top 20*

Beneath my closing lids the scene still waits

168-3. LIONESS

your mate abdicates the role

169-4. KING TUTANKHAMUN: ONCE THERE WAS ABOY WHO LOVED TO WHISTLE *In Top 20*

Young pharoah, I studied your museumed effigies

170-5. LAST UNCLE

In my dandelion days

171-6. YOU ASK IF I'VE FORGOTTEN HIM

I think of him when lightning splits

172-7. THE ENLIGHTENED ONE  
Fujiyama:

~~173~~-8. BEQUEST FOR AN ARTIST WHO DIED IN THE SPRING

Shades of leftover ~~night~~ winter dull the pigments, etc.

*Disqualified - no prize  
or publication indicated on poem  
(although I am sure it has been published)  
I won't prize  
sorry.  
Glenna*

Dear Vivian:

I hope you have a lovely Christmas season. If you went to the Texas poetry dinner, I hope you liked my Hawaii poem. Trust you got my thank you note. *yes -*

Not much chance I'll win the Dec. pot twice but decided to try. I've been sickly most of the year. Thank God for poetry. These aren't all new of course, but I have written more this year than ever before. Also have been doing a lot of judging which I enjoy. Would be glad to do it for you sometime if you wish.

*Received your letter - March poems will be fine for you to judge in April.  
Thanks loads!*

Cordially,

*Glenna*

*Vivian*

*1/13/85*



## CAT OF ONE COLOR

(Felis concolor)

She's hard to find. He's even harder.  
 But if westering luck is just so, and the wind,  
 your six senses stropped on its wake,  
 you may see one—  
 you won't forget a mountain lion's eyes.  
 Nothing in those eyes spells trust  
 but no malice either despite the stalking lies.

Raw gold from Oriental idol or maybe  
 summer lightning, the eyes burn cool and easy—  
 slant-lit slots fringed with gentians,  
 quartz-capped shadow crosshatched with bones,  
 limbs, fleeing legs of deer, suntanned grass  
 tinged with pine-drop, amber globules  
 on twigs, stormed-down aspen hearts, spruce cones  
 and wilding wavy smells— Here the eyes belong  
 for looking in, for looking out—  
 windows matching pale tawn  
 designed for quiet and quick or gone.

In a back-warp of timeance and time  
 catamount came to rhyme with vermin; ~~dark scalled~~  
 dogs and bullets the exclamation points  
 of ignorance— all feline-coded. ~~all feline~~  
 in the gilded, fluent glance,  
 a shrug of fact, a loaded blink.

Caught now leaping the kindred sun in slow motion,  
 framed free on my sprocketed strip of pulse-stop,  
 the cougar figures a sum of truth in live color.  
 And for me the nature of joy  
 will never be the same.

top 10  
 Now this is a  
 poem -

## THEORY OF RELATIVITY: THE FELINE FACTOR

The fourth dimension  
is better understood now  
living with a life form  
that claims the realm of clocks  
and calendars as its own.  
The lesson wanders home  
circuitous orbits of shadow and shine  
skyward tail aquiver with equations  
ending in a distinctive warp  
its wearer owes to lunar time  
advanced in arcane ritual.

Between his multi-lives out there  
my lap is a warm space station  
sometimes not fully approved.  
I learn minute increments  
of days and nights slowly  
while waiting for the sidewise approach  
of distance  
to rub my shins with forgiveness.

top 15  
good metaphors



## DUET

Music in a minor key  
tunnels in my ear like a threading screw  
and lodges in a hungry hollow.  
Echo isn't what it does there--  
this isn't ricochet sound  
fading as it goes, but what I hear  
begins at the top and plays through  
then, undiminished, plays again.  
It may last hours, follow me to sleep.  
Next day, next month it comes  
unbidden, not from outside prompting.

I've homed on guitars on dark beaches,  
halted dials sliding toward the 10 o'clock news,  
followed a tipsy tenor trio bringing  
some unknown aria to a tremulous minor denouement  
on a street corner in Oslo.

One night in San Francisco  
you played some Debussy  
improvising modulating filling  
my special space until my sympathetic tines  
were trembling like gold aspens.  
I slipped from my group and moved  
toward your unseen face. But you had left  
the piano to blend with other guests.  
Still I knew you by your voice and when  
you repeated my name your jade and lavender notes  
matched my vault where all those wind and water  
chords are stored. So after all their years  
of haunting, waiting for direction,  
you gave them a theme  
and put them in endless concerto  
with space for those we'll hear tomorrow  
together.



Glenna Holloway  
913 E. Bailey Rd.  
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OLD "IROQUOIS WHIT", RED MAN WITH A WHITE CANE

Glenna Holloway

For him our metaphors are worse than trite;  
Most modern terms are bothers to his brain  
Where years-gone wispy hunter's trails remain  
And only childhood images are bright.  
When man transcends his bone-imprisoned night  
To touch shore's gritty Braille or taste fresh rain,  
His lengthened grasp can snatch the key from pain  
To open what mere language failed to light.  
We read to Whit, then he became our gauge,  
Our guide for measures we could seldom find  
To pace the dark, to pacify the rage.  
For we, far sighted, young and keen of mind,  
Were often trapped inside a blackened cage—  
Till life re-lit with vision from the blind.

good!  
cannot touch it  
unless it is completely  
free,  
H.J.



FALLING WEATHER

Glenna Holloway

The last of autumn came down wet and hard.  
For nearly two weeks all we heard  
was warring water, javelins of rain.  
And then subverted river overran  
its trench, joined forces with its kin  
to sludge the lowlands, slime the cane.  
For miles the occupation gray-washed  
mudscapes as the mindless wind-prod wished,  
letting all our sullen eyes reflect  
our impotence. At last we watch foam-flocked  
retreat; faint sun grovels in refraction  
of trickles, withdrawal etched by friction  
between what stays and what must leave.  
Then while we sort the salvage, lave  
the conscious grit and clear the rubbled mind,  
rebel clouds regroup under new command.

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*You have certainly used near-  
rhymes with care. While finding  
this an accomplishment worth  
noting, I do not feel the poem is  
a Lyric.*



## FALLING WEATHER

The last of autumn came down wet and hard.  
For nearly two weeks all we heard  
was warring water, javelins of rain.  
Soon subverted river overran  
its trench, joined forces with its kin  
to sludge the valley, slime the cane.  
For miles the occupation gray-washed  
homes with camouflage, patterned as wind wished,  
making all our captive eyes reflect  
our impotence. And now we watch foam-flocked  
retreat: Faint sun grovels in refraction  
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## BUYING BANANAS

Vivid and verdant as giant pea pods  
it will be 4 or 5 days  
before you can eat them.

If you skinned one now and left it  
on the table it would turn to an ivory tusk.  
If you swallowed one now it would sink  
like a petrified log inside your moist tropics,  
tasting of gall green and primeval evolution.  
Whiffs of grocers' warehouse wizardry  
have already rescheduled their secret golding  
halted when hacked from their mothering tree.  
Nothing can hurry them now.  
Time tickles the codes within.

Five years ago I brought you home green  
firm and curved. Everyone said  
you would ripen into a perfect mate.  
I'm still waiting  
for those first freckles of sweetness.



## CROW WATCH

Each year third week in August  
they come to savage my cornfield  
and twang my nerves with Halloween laughter  
thousands of greasy black rags  
from the refuse bins of hell  
flapping all over my sight  
dirtying my days  
violating my airspace.

Then when the corn is gone  
one of the loitering bastards  
will spite my well with its death  
from overeating  
while another spikes the placenta of my dreams  
and impales the dark navel of the mind  
on its crucible eye.

## AFRICAN CHRONICLE: THE BAOBAB TREE

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