

Judge's Special Commendation

*Glenn
Holloway*

How else could you describe

a Cheshire sort of smile?

What best conveys those hazel eyes

that can and do beguile?

And what about the term for thieves

who climb to do their taking?

Likewise the special kind of sleep

you snatch right after waking.

A perfect means for explaining

just how an Indian walks.

No other word but purring

suits how a sex pot talks.

An adjective for gossips

who hiss and claw their friends,

And don't forget coy women,

and those who copy trends:

A tribute to the human,

crass slander for the cat—

Not one deserves comparison

with conduct such as that.

It's safe to say that sometime

you'll let one out a bag,

As sure as one can get your tongue

and yours will make you brag.

When we apply felinity

our meanings crystalize;

Expression widens louvered eyes,

then stretches long and wise.

LAST UNCLE

In my dandelion days
I had five tall men
who swooped me to their shoulders, swung me,
made me squeal deliciously.

In my frantic floribunda days
they began leaving
and I let them, without ever learning
of the last days of the Cavalry, without feeling
the bees' warmth against the glass lab cases, meeting
the queens, tasting the special honey,
without watching the wet hands at the potter's wheel,
but reaching out my own each year for the fine pots.

Once in my tearose days
it served me to serve with the cognac
what I had heard without listening—how one had flown
the early U.S. Mail, had twice met Lindy,
had crashed in a swamp but saved his cargo.
A dry-box tidbit with only a faint aroma
of rich ragout. Because I was always
singing in the choir, collecting carnival glass,
photographing children in the garden.

And now in my pastel hollyhock days
there is one. My faded luggage is crammed with empty
pages as this jet eats space from east to west,
and I wonder if he'll feel like talking.

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Prize Poems, 1980
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LAST UNCLE
Glenna Holloway

In my dandelion days
I had five tall men
who swooped me and my dolls to their shoulders,
made me squeal deliciously.

In my frantic floribunda days
they began leaving
and I let them, without ever learning
of the last days of the Cavalry, without feeling
the bees' warmth against the glass lab cases, meeting
the queens, tasting the honey— without watching
the wet hands at the potter's wheel,
but reaching out my own each year for the fine bowls.

Once in my tearose days, it served me
to serve with the cognac
what I had heard without listening—how one had flown
the early U.S Mail, had twice met Lindy,
had crashed in a swamp but saved his cargo.
A dry-box tidbit with only a faint aroma
of rich ragout. Because I was always
singing in the choir, collecting carnival glass,
photographing children in the garden.

cont.

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Last Uncle

2.

And now in my pastel hollyhock days
there is one. My faded luggage is crammed
with empty pages as this jet eats space
from east to west,
and I wonder if he'll feel like talking.

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TO HIM WHO PROPOSED WITH SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS

Glenna Holloway

Oh, love, were I to know the larger truth,
Would I find feigning in thy patterned prose?
If flattered, fogged eyes and sweetened tooth
Could truly gauge the metal of thy pose—
Would it be pure and precious? Would it hold my
My imprint dearly, yielding to my touch?
Or would alloyed resistance make thee bold,
Revealing in thy smooth caress, a clutch?
Ah, love, perhaps it is not wise to test
How malleable and rich thine offerings.
And yet one answer my soul must request
Before we move to merge our profferings.

Art thou in love with all the facts of me—

Or more enamored of fecundity?

(While I'm Trying To Write A French Rondeau)

YOU ASK IF I'VE FORGOTTEN HIM

I think of him when lightning splits
The pines astride this ridge then hits
The thicket wall still rolling fire.
Brush flares, rain hisses, makes a spire
Of smoke, a claim. It rarely quits
With that, but smolders in the pits
Of sticks and limbs till all my wits
Are stoked, so after I retire

I think of him.

In warming times each year this blitz
Re-scars my woods. I search for bits
Of green around charred wounds, then liar-
Like, hail life as something to desire.
All winter when my likeness fits,

I think of him.

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HOW TO MAKE THE RIVER AN OLD MAN

This river was an athlete sprinting south,
A whistling boy with rhythmic summer stride.
The settlers drew cool sweetness from his mouth
And made themselves spectators on his side.
Efficiently he handle rain and thaw;
He grew their wheat and cotton into fame.
His flanks became a city; those who saw
Made plans to stay, while daily others came.
Pure drinking—mallards— trout— were not enough.
Machines re-routed him; they built a dam.
They stole his power, dumped their poison-stuff,
Then cursed him for the filth where once they swam.
Now reeking, limping past a factory,
He seeks a nameless burial at sea.

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MAKING THE RIVER AN OLD MAN

Glenna Holloway

The river was an athlete sprinting south,
A whistling boy with rhythmic summer stride.
The settlers drew cool sweetness from his mouth
And made themselves spectators on his side.
Efficiently he handled rain and thaw;
He grew their wheat and cotton into fame.
His flanks became a city; those who saw
Desired to stay, and daily others came.
Pure drinking, mallards, trout were not enough.
Machines re-routed him; they built a dam.
They stole his power, dumped their poison-stuff,
Then cursed him for the filth where once they swam.
Now reeking, limping past a factory,
He seeks a nameless burial at sea.