



NORTHERN LIGHTS . 86

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DEDICATION

to
Mary Jean Bilek

As you retire at the end of this academic year, we dedicate to you this edition of NORTHERN LIGHTS, in recognition of your eighteen years at the Center and your unflagging encouragement and support of the arts. If this volume, our collective effort, is creative and well-crafted, it mirrors your example.



S. Godleske

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The serigraph which appears on the cover was created by Sandra Godleske; Lisa Boivin designed the block print on the title page.

We were not able to publish all the entries submitted this year, but we wish to thank everyone who contributed.

Copy Editor/Layout: Karen Atwood. Faculty Sponsors: James LaMalfa, Jane Yarbrough, Daniel Atwood.

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NEW MEXICO, 1986
. jane yarbrough

Earth cooled.
Sluggish streams and dry winds
Formed immense dunes.
An ancient ocean lapped their slopes
And receded.
Mesas appeared, mountains rose;
Running water and wind
Ate at the soft rock,
Carving valleys.

Here the Anasazi lived,
Building homes from the primordial mud,
Farming maize in the primordial mud.
Then the explorers came,
Bringing time.

They saw the old cliffs as mirrors:
The face of loneliness, the empty glass.
So they wrote their names and times,
Signs against the sun, tempting the wind--
"Se pasó aquí en el año" of this life,
In search of the cooling pool of El Morro.

They came to the impassable gorge:
The open wound, the dream of failing.
So they threw their coins and charms
Into the devil's gash, prayers to infinity--
"Cosa que solo él puso en este efecto,"
For our lives, abyss of the Río Grande.

Anasazi, Hopi, Navajo, Zuñi,
Señor y gobernador y padre all passed here.
Kit Carson, Zebulon Pike, D.H. Lawrence
Passed too and through the cliffs and gorges
Of the eras marching the canyon walls.

Now we look; landscape gives its warmth,
Exudes its story in striae
Of red and purple and gray.

We know the dark lines,
The burning on the rock,
The echoes in the gorge.

Now we pass; weather marks our passage,
Weather wears their words.
Yet nothing is ever lost:
Cliff dwellings, inscriptions on stone,
Our wishes on pennies thrown.
Esperanza siempre.



DREAMS AFAR . michael s. johnson

Like the wind,
Bending trees as if they were pins,
Like the sun,
Baking muddy tiles in a hot-house sky,
The puddles dry,
The music dies.
Only the flowers kiss the sky,
Only the children have the courage
To dream afar.

FROM THE WINDOWS OF THE TRAIN . linda linczeski

From the windows of the train,
I see discarded inner-city slums:
Houses so close they nearly touch
Peeling paint, junky yards
Broken windows, tattered shades
Broken lives, tattered dreams.

Can this be part of the American "Dream"?
Can kids who grow up here become president?
Can they buy a home? Get a job?
Can they even survive?

Politicians should take the train.
Instead they fly,
Blind to what is below.

NEWBIRTH . james la malfa

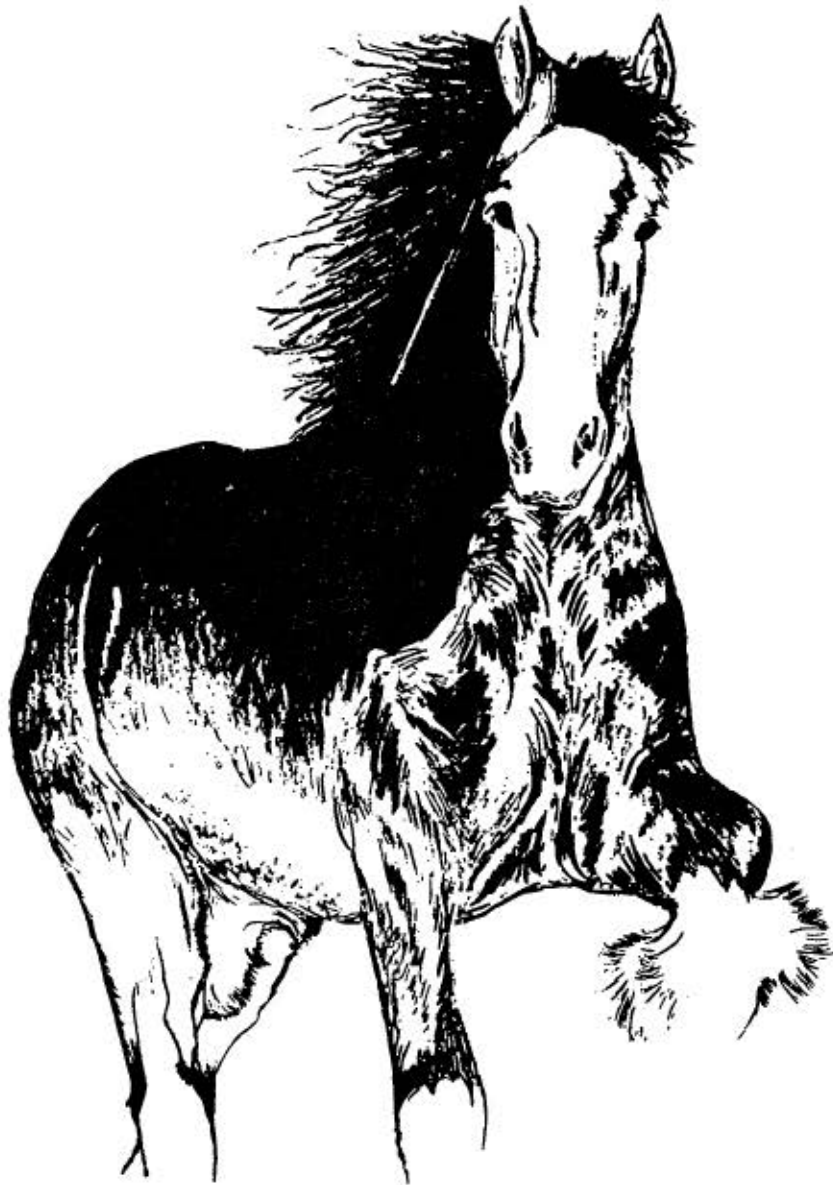
"It's time," she said, kissing me on the cheek.
Leaving sleep behind, I gained awareness,
A swimmer rising from subterranean liquid depths.

My child was coming:
I would be there, sharing the necessary pain,
Sharing the always joy of newbirth.

Don't tell me of your miracle creams and tangerine dreams,
Trivial pursuits, shooting the moon,
Cities of men soaring into the acid yellow sky,
Concrete ribbons from coast to coast, stretching
From lost midnights to nowhere in particular,
Hurrying people along to a future grimmer than today,
Robot presidents, electric newspapers, singing telegrams,
Sugarbaby cereals poisoning our kids,
Tee vee rocks, super jocks,
Bigger zoos and Asian flus,
Corruption, eruption, infiltration, saturation,
All in living room color.

I have seen something more precious, more exquisite
Than the whole of our high-tech, state-wreck,
morning-after blues.
I have seen the birth of my son,
His body rich with glistening film from the womb,
Gleaming wet like a newly made jewel,
Reflecting the fluorescence and chrome of his birthing chamber.

That moment, the instant when he cried
his first cry, acknowledging life,
My whole life focused,
Was brought to bear on a single second,
As my child began the joy and travail of living.



Lisa Bowen

KING FOR A MOMENT . ray clark

Bo had his moment in the summer of 1972 on an aircraft carrier off the coast of Viet Nam. Some of America's finest young men were maturing rapidly in a world full of life-and-death situations. Miles Ray Diehl, better known as Bo, was one of them. He was easy to recognize in a crowd. In his late teens, he stood about six-foot one and was two-hundred pounds of muscle. His shoes were seldom tied, and the back of his pant cuffs were worn ragged because his belt just didn't do its job. Bo had a full beard, blue eyes, and long blonde hair -- long that is, by Navy standards. He could keep it long because he always wore his old, green flight helmet, complete with chin strap that was always blowing in the wind. Bo never said much, yet when he did, it was loud and everyone listened. He was an awesome sight, a modern day pirate if ever there was one. But it was all a facade, for Bo was one of the nicest men ever to come out of Texas.

That summer Bo and Barry were assigned to install a radar transmitter in the skipper's aircraft. Bo was all business, slow and lumbering, yet once started, he was determined not to stop until the job was finished. Barry, on the other hand, was a good ole country boy from Arkansas. He would take a break just to plan when his next break should be. Moreover, he would expend three times the energy needed to do a job, just trying to find an easier way.

To install a radar transmitter, one must stand on a ladder, lift and hold the transmitter in place, then tighten the bolts, while being careful to see that the waveguides are all in place. A second man is supposed to hold the ladder and steady the radome, the fiberglass cover for the radar compartment, so that it doesn't come off the brace and crash down on the first man's head.

Now this installation was being done on the deck of an aircraft carrier during flight operations. Just yards away, jet engines were screaming as aircraft landed and took off. Barry was new on the flight deck and wasn't too sure he liked it. He looked around nervously at everything going on around him.

As Bo tightened the first bolt, the ladder shook--or was it the plane? Bo glared down at Barry. With nostrils flared, neck pulsed, eyes red with anger, he yelled, over the noise of the flight deck, "Barry, if you make me drop this transmitter, I'm gonna kill you!" Without a word, Barry whipped around and ran straight for the shop. The radome crashed down on Bo's head. He quickly secured the transmitter and headed for the shop, with the determination of a bull charging a matador.

As he entered, he heard Barry say, "My mind kept saying 'Run! run,' but my feet just wouldn't go!" The guy was obviously scared. Bo sensed that this was his big moment. He felt like a king, savoring the thought that his tough guy act had had such dramatic impact on Barry. But the warm glow lasted only a moment. As the men in the shop continued to talk, Bo found out what had really happened.

"Hey, look," someone said, "they're showing a replay." On the flight operations monitor, they could see the mail plane coming in for a landing. It caught a wire, then slipped off, clipping the tails of four aircraft, the last being the skipper's. The wing of the mail plane landed ten feet from Bo and Barry and started spewing fuel onto the flight deck.

"Look at Barry go!" somebody said.

Someone else pointed out that Bo was finishing the job and walking off the flight deck. "That guy must have nerves of steel!" he said, with admiration.

"Hey, Bo, weren't you scared? . . . Bo? . . . Hey, Bo . . ." There was only silence. As the realization of what had happened set in, Bo turned dead white.

LONG-TERM CARE: PSYCHIATRIC . david thibodeau

one man, his eyes glazed over with fetal dreams,
surveys his far-flung empires

he has run bravely, though having sinned,
long painful miles of years,
his entrails streaming merrily,
his entrails streaming in the wind.

HAVE YOU SEEN A MISSING SOUL? . steven demcak

Has anyone seen,
Will anything save,
Has anyone found,
My soul today?

Emptiness,
Fragments of love--all
Puzzles within my heart,
Mixed somehow.

How will I find
A place to house
All the broken pieces
Of my heart?

Intently searching,
Circling about,
I find not
That for which I seek.

Have you found,
Have you seen,
A missing soul--
Today?

SIGNS OF LOVE
. edie boesen

My head turns
at the sound of your seductive voice

My stomach knots
at your handsome smile

My hands tremble
at your nearness

My eyes glisten
at the mention of your name

My heart melts
at just the thought of you:

I think I'm in love.

SPRINGTIDE
. james la malfa

A careless robin, perching on my worn ladder, celebrates life,
caring not that my pile of refuse violates the holy dark wood.

He cares not that we humans and our
teeming cities could utterly pass away.

His world would continue, spring would come on schedule,
seeds germinate on the wet black forest floor,

Hibernating frogs would still uncoil, feeling the tug of
new growth,

Sister moon would still glide silently over the greening
nocturnal landscape,

As a great hunting owl impassively planned the death of a
silent mouse moving among the dry leaves of last fall.

If we should pass away, who among
Nature's children would mourn?

None.



Lisa Bowen

I'D RETURN TO YOU . anonymous

Though I had wings
And could soar
To worlds unimagined
Beyond my door.



Ann Boburka

FROM THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION . mary jean bilek

I've survived . . .

Razor-blade ditto corrections
A cranky mimeo
A temperamental photocopier
A noisy manual typewriter
The smell of pot on the premises
The odor of dirty jeans and hair
Musk oil
Forms, forms, forms
"But do your credits transfer?"

UWGB Year One
Merger
Campus closure threat
Campus closure threat
Campus closure threat
Egos unjustified
Egos justified
Budget cuts

The Ides of March
Cancellations
"The Little Foxes"
"Everything in the Garden"
The Gypsy Gems
Al Capp

Purchase orders
Approval for purchase orders
Blanket orders
State Printing Order Bulletins

1977 - beep - click - silence
A bomb threat
Male chauvinism
Radical feminism
Energy mandate: 65°
Collegium meetings
Acadenese

Eighteen TOB summers
Timetables
Viewbooks
Catalogs
Gray photographs
Typos uncaught
Errors in fact
New releases, news releases, news releases
"There wasn't enough publicity!"

Deadlines
Deadlines
Deadlines
Deadlines

. . . I'm still alive
And it's been fun.

SEMESTER FINAL . sally m. ehner

-- ESSAY EXAM --

1) What follows a question?

... a white so bright
it blinds my mind.

FROM THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION . mary jean bilek

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SEMESTER FINAL . sally m. ehert

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it blinds my mind.

WITHIN AND WITHOUT

. **betsy la malfa**

What is this quivering inside of me?
It is my child, naked, stripped of all corruption.
A benevolent hand touched mine,
And now a fresh spirit makes its dawn in my life.

What must this quivering inside of you be?
It is fear, naked and stripped of all hope.
A black hand passed over your life
As the prime mover bid you goodbye.

My joy began as a single cell.
It multiplied and flourished within me,
And it is life.

Your despair, my friend, also began as a single cell.
It multiplied and flourished within you,
And it is death.

I pause and ponder the vastness of these parallels.

Should I feel guilty?
Or does my bliss cancel your pain
In the great balance of life?

Should I feel lucky?
Or am I just a few steps behind you
On the eternal road of Time?

Is it Fate that fathers cancerous fatality,
Just as it unites this egg with that sperm?

I believe not:
It is Nature, that is all.
She steals upon us as the scent of a spring shower;
She wrenches and rips us with furious tornadoes.
She is both splendid and cruel,
Chaotic, yet intricately patterned.

But Nature is also Renewal.
My baby will fill a void where your life once was.
The robin will be heard amid the melting snow.
Surely our glory and grief, my dear friend,
Have their purpose, too.



Amy Allgayer

REMINISCENCE . darren bucksa

As time goes by and minds grow wise,
We tend to shed our old disguise.

The things we thought, or thought we knew,
Have now become so fake, untrue.

Decisions made were often wrong,
But thought as right in times long gone.

And looking back on our mistakes,
Regrets will come and so will aches.

But past will stay in one fixed state,
And so we must accept our fate.

HIDDEN IN DARKNESS . linda linczeski

In the darkness
Bright lights beam like rays of hope--
Hope that tomorrow will be a better day.

As the stark light of dawn probes this scene,
Yesterday is still there--
Poverty, filth, despair.
With morning light, all hope fades.

Perhaps in this neighborhood,
Darkness is better--
The evidence of reality is hidden.
In darkness, at least there is hope.

FIRST TROPHY BUCK . warren menor

I had planned to make a deer hunting trip years ago and had even prepared myself by reading American Sportsman, Outdoor Life, and Sports Afield. This was the year I finally went after my first buck. I dressed for the trip in a wool shirt, pants rigged with orange suspenders, and a fluorescent orange jacket. I crammed the necessary gear into my Mercedes 280SE, cased my custom deluxe 30:06 Browning with its hand-carved walnut stock, and headed north three hundred miles.

When I reached Michigan, I stopped for lunch at a diner filled with fellow hunters. There's nothing like hearing tales of previous seasons to heighten the excitement. One hunter had had a twelve-point buck stand fifty feet in front of him--only to have his gun misfire. Another hunter dropped an eight pointer with a single shot, set down his gun to field dress the deer, and saw it get up and run off, as he watched in shock. As I headed on toward camp, my mind imagined the tales I would be able to tell about my own hunting experiences.

When I reached camp, I was shocked at its decayed exterior. The logs were rotted, windows were cracked and covered with plastic, and the roof sagged like an old lady's bosom. Six beer-bellied, scraggly-bearded men, with shirts too small and pants hanging at the hips, staggered out to greet me. After examining my rifle, their expressions turned to smiles. I guess they were impressed. Inside camp, I was met by a smell that reminded me of the Chicago stock yards in late July. Obviously, this camp would win no awards from Good Housekeeping. As I looked things over, two items seemed out of place: a velvet-lined gun cabinet containing fourteen very expensive rifles, and a head mount of a ten-point buck. I figured after two nights of poker I would own both.

Our first night of cards was a learning experience for everyone. I taught those rednecks how to play poker, while they taught me that skill will not overcome luck. While we played, they talked about "buck fever." Now I had heard of yellow fever, scarlet fever, rheumatic fever, and I had even read about Rocky Mountain tick fever--but never "buck fever."

Natives, apparently, are immune to this disease, but civilized folks are vulnerable. Perhaps ignorance is a serum.

My week in camp passed quickly. With only one day remaining, I was the only hunter who had not been successful, but that did not lessen my determination. The final day was rainy and quite breezy, but this did not deter me from sitting on a cushion of pine needles and leaves, waiting for my trophy. The only creature dumb enough to venture out in such weather was a squirrel, who must have drawn the short straw in deciding who was to harass me on my last day. After listening to him chatter for two hours, I picked up a stick and threw it, narrowly missing him, and then disgustedly headed back to camp. I didn't know which stunk worse, the outhouse or this whole hunting trip.

It had cost me over fifteen hundred dollars, plus an additional eight hundred dollars in poker losses; if they'd accepted Master Charge or Visa, the totals might have been higher. But I wasn't going home empty-handed. After dusting off my "trophy"--that ten-point head mount--and loading it in my car, I realized how those shysters had acquired the fourteen, now fifteen, expensive guns displayed in the oak cabinet.

As I pulled away, I took one last look and saw six cretins laughing uncontrollably. Those illiterate twerps--they'd never survive in the city.

TO AN ARTIST
. sally m. ehnert

To an artist, there is nothing more intriguing
than the hungry stare of a vacant canvas.

WARHOL



Ann Boliska

WITHIN THE PINES . david bedrosian

Each morning as I eat breakfast, I stare into a world of memories outside my window. I see the pines, huge trees, towering above everything, looking down on the world with the knowledge of many years stored in their thick, solid trunks. They seem to protect something within, as if they were mother elephants standing in a circle around their young. An aura of mystery and intrigue is generated. What is beyond? It is their secret. They are the gatekeepers, guards placed to protect a miniature kingdom. Within their confines lie a boy's hopes, dreams, and accomplishments.

When he first ventured into their world, the boy found a clearing. Although choked with wicked weeds and strewn with dead wood and rocks, it would serve his purpose. At its edge stood a giant elm, solitary, noble, erect. It was a proud old tree. It had witnessed the piney walls rise and mature and hadn't argued. They lived together. Now, the elm was almost hidden, and only from within the clearing was it visible, judging everyone and everything that entered and left.

The boy looked at that tree and envisioned his world: a world that offered security, privacy, a place to expand himself, to grow, to find out who he was and what life was about, a place to think. Time passed and his dreams slowly took form. He chopped paths into the undergrowth beneath the pines and lined them with white rocks, imported from the gravel road on the other side of the house. The empire grew. Buildings rose and fell. An irrigation system was formed. But it still needed a capital.

A lone rock-lined road led to the Elm. The ancient tree watched over everything, absorbing the knowledge of life within the pines. It stood tall and strong, giving no sign of the life that was seeping slowly out of its great limbs. It was as though its life was being sacrificed for the empire growing beneath it. Still it stood, proud, against the green of the pines, its bald limbs reaching out like fingers grasping for the life that was oozing from its roots, into the air, the ground, the pines, everywhere.

Within these grasping fingers, the boy erected the tiny kingdom's capital, his last monumental accomplishment. Architecturally, it was not flawless, but it served his purpose. Each nail had a purpose, each board a minute task. Though the roof that was envisioned never materialized, the miniature three-story castle proved itself effective in withstanding foreign missiles, sticks, rocks, bark, water, corncocks, and dreaded four-sided boomerangs hurled at it by the boy's enemies. It was built to endure, as was the entire empire.

One of the boy's greatest dreams was that someday thousands of years later, the kingdom would be discovered and recognized not as a boy's, but as a man's or a society's. It was the era of wood and bark and white rocks, they would say. But time had other ideas. Just as the transcendent elm succumbed to time, the tiny kingdom crumbled and lies rotting in the depths of the pines. The walls now hide, rather than protect, the once mighty fortress, its dilapidated buildings and roads. Though dead, the elm still stands. To this day, it retains its nobility. The aura of mystery and inquiry is still there. The feelings are the same, though some of the boy's dreams have been dashed. The proud, tough walls that were built to last have broken, even the white rocks have cracked. The life the boy breathed into his kingdom has vanished. Perhaps someday, someone else will breathe life into it again.

Beyond the window, within those colossal pines, lie many a dream, memories of times that will not be forgotten, thoughts, emotions, and desires that the depths of time cannot bury. I view it all each morning.



**FOR "SOMEONE SPECIAL"
. linda bergeson**

I'd like to cuddle next to you,
rest my weary mind upon your shoulder,
close my eyes, and feel your gentle
fingertips playing on my body.

I'd like to sigh with complete content
and smile secretly at the feeling your
nearness conjures.

I'd like to feel your warm breath
tickling my ear,
see you smile once again,

And know I was the reason.

FOR HER . marlene bournonville

What do you give to a giver,

To a man who's given all his life?

I've decided today

What I'll give this giver:

A gift he can give
to his wife.

**A SHIMMERING GLOW
. david h. kessel**

Distant flowers, seen in relief,
Come into focus, transcending belief.
As rooms lighted dimly, compelling to know,
The shadows take form and thus they are so.

Their roots seem firm, they lead us to think,
Yet motion abounds, they're never dry ink.
They're seen in a picture, heard in a song,
There for embracing, but never for long.

We meet many people, most we forget,
And hold to a path because it is set.
But every so often, immersed in the flow,
Love takes the form of a shimmering glow.

A LIAR'S SONG . david thibodeau

I swear by all the saints
I do not covet her,
That incomparable woman.

No leagues of devils
Could make me wish
To hold her in my arms.

I stand firm,
A man of stalwart rectitude,
And do not even look when she walks by.

CONVERSATION IN THE CHICKEN COOP . david thibodeau

Say, Buddy, I been thinkin'. You remember Old Jack? I ain't seen him round for quite a time.

Old Jack? No, I ain't seen him, neither.

Well, us chickens ain't known for good memory, but I remember somethin'. You remember one time the screen door bang and the old farmer come in with that ax?

Yeah, I remember it. Sounded by the sqwakin' like he run Old Jack three-four times round the shed.

Well, I think he never brung that old rooster back.

Maybe he throw Old Jack in another coop.

Listen! You ever hear him crow? I remember Old Jack crowin', and I don't hear him no more! Listen! One old hen peek through a crack in the boards, and she claim that old farmer takin' Jack behind the woodshed. After a while there's a whole bunch of feathers flyin' round. You know what I think? Maybe he chop Old Jack's head off with that ax!

You think they haul corn and stuff in here and bring water and treat us good, then turn round and chop off Old Jack's head?

Everyday that old lady come here and haul off the eggs. Maybe they want eggs for somethin'. Roosters don't lay no eggs. They ain't anyhow got enough roosters. Only three of us left, and thirty-two hens. Why'd they keep us roosters and throw in corn and mash and bring water, then turn round and chop off our heads? It don't make no sense. And another thing--that old farmer taken a shot at that chicken hawk that's hangin' round here, and he blowed that skunk half in two that et up some the eggs. Then you tell me he come in here, run Old Jack round three or four circles, and chop off his head?

All I know is next time that screen door bang and that old farmer come round with that ax, you goin' to see some mighty fancy zig-zaggin'!



Debbie Meyer

SUMMERS . linda bergeson

Sometimes it seems summer will never come:
the summer of the year,
the summer of my life.
Other seasons come and go so willingly,
But summer is reluctant.

And when it does come,
It always has to hurry off.
Like an ever-youthful wanderer,
It's here for all-too-brief an interlude,
Then gone, on its way to greener pastures,
distant shores.

We need to learn to recognize its comings
swiftly
And enjoy them to the full,
For when they finally do arrive,
the summers of the year,
the summers of our lives,
All too quickly, they are gone.

