



BEAT THE DUST

March 2008

Guest Editor, Mark SaFranko

Writer of cult novels 'Hating Olivia: A Love Story' and the excellent sequel 'Lounge Lizard' as well as countless short stories, plays, poems and songs.

An introduction by Mark SaFranko



It has been a challenge functioning as the guest editor for the March issue of *Beat the Dust*. Every submission I've had the privilege of reading had merit. I admired and respected the imagination, talent and work that went into each poem and story. And I'm not just saying that – I mean it sincerely. I told Melissa to accept and publish every piece, something she assured me was an impossibility. That's too bad. I believe that each of the poems and stories I read will find a home somewhere. I can only advise you to practise what every writer worth his salt knows is the key to finding an audience – unrelenting persistence. It's tough out there and the last thing I want to be is a roadblock for anyone.

Now, as to why one title was chosen over another. Well, that's hard to explain actually. It may have had to do with the fact that I hadn't slept well the night before. Or maybe that the disk in my back was acting up. Or that at the moment for personal reasons I don't quite feel like reading a love poem. So you get the idea of how this process works. The old saw about being lucky enough to have your words fall on the desk of an editor at the right moment is true. You put in

your best effort and the rest is in the hands of random fate. Rest assured that your work was good.

If I didn't select your poem or story this time around, feel free to tell me to go and screw myself. Tell me that I don't know what I'm doing and that I don't know my ass from my elbow. You'll be right to do it. And believe me, I know. I've had to tell all those thick-headed editors the same thing countless times myself.

Yoda interviews Jack T. Marlowe



Yoda: So, a writer you are?

Jack: You talk funny.

Yoda: From Texas you are, and *I* talk funny?

Jack: Ever had a size 14 boot up your ass?

Yoda: Disrespectful you are. The Force is strong in you, but turned your back on the light, you have.

Jack: The dark side is more interesting.

Yoda: And dark your writing is. Why?

Jack: Too much caffeine and too little sleep. And too much exposure to the human race. Ever read a newspaper?

Yoda: Argue with that, I can not.

Jack: Exactly. And you can soak up more of my bad attitude at www.inkandblood.net.

anticlimax by Jack T. Marlowe

the lightness
of his wallet
in the wake
of her footsteps

the heaviness
descending
upon his body

the lingering bouquet
of ripe vagina
with a hint
of dollar-store perfume

and the reeking duet
of pine and stale piss

the ventilator's
gentle breath
caressing
the top of his head

the hard plastic seat
embracing
his bare backside

the mocking echo
of an exchange
between strangers
a hasty coupling
of small words

and the stubborn
voice of obsession
that drove him there

the hot prospect
of anonymous sex
that once filled
his thoughts

the hot fluid
that now fills
his lungs

the cold reality
of the blade
fucking
his chest cavity

blood spurting
like his
now spent seed
onto the cold floor
of a men's room stall

wasted desire
consciousness
and black tar smoke
disappearing
like a thief--

or a thieving
junkie whore--
into the night

socratic method (jack's version) by Jack T. Marlowe

when circumstance
gives you
a cup of hemlock
to drink
it doesn't really
matter
if it's half empty
or half full

does it?

you can
either take it
or not

and if you choose
to drink it
you'd better
ask yourself first
if you're
truly prepared
to swallow
the consequences.

tonsonial musings by Jack T. Marlowe

another 24 hours
slip by, incognito
with nothing
noteworthy
in the realms
of pleasure or pain

no major wins
or losses

just piles
of bills and
cigarette
butts
growing faster
than

my hair

as i shed
these words
onto the page
sitting
in Death's
barber chair

fully
cognizant
that an
uneventful day
is most
probably

just another
close shave.

Michael Grover interviews himself



Michael Grover: So how are you?

M.D.G: What are you talkin' about? This is ridiculous. You know how I am.

Michael Grover: How did you get into poetry?

M.D.G: It started when I was born. I have always been a writer. My father noticed my interest in writing and started passing me down his old books. Ginsberg's "Howl", "The Communist Manifesto", James Kavanaugh, stuff like that. I grew up in South Florida which is a really oppressive place. I kept my writing to myself, or started zines and published myself. When I moved to LA in the late nineties I started meeting real poets that really performed their stuff with a lot of passion. I went to the same readings as them and started working hard so I could perform beside them. I got into underground publishing around the same time, and here I am.

Michael Grover: Tell us how Covert Press got started.

M.D.G: I started just publishing my own chapbooks on it. Then a man who I consider one of the best poets alive, John G. Hall of Manchester, England asked me if I would publish and edit a

collection by him. I couldn't refuse. Since then I've published another chapbook of my own and John Dorsey from Toledo, Ohio who's kind of an underground press legend. We are planning on publishing Dorsey's second manuscript on Covert Press.

Michael Grover: What are your influences poetically?

M.D.G: I'm more influenced by the oral poets that use sound as much as they do written word. Poets like Bob Kaufman and Amiri Baraka. I'm also very influenced by hip-hop.

Michael Grover: Any last words?

M.D.G: A poet that I once knew in LA told me to go with my poetry and nothing will ever make me freer. He was a wise man. I'm loving the places that poetry is taking me. I would suggest it to anyone, but it takes a special breed. It's a tough life, but it's well worth it. I may have nothing, but I'm a rich man.

currency by Michael Grover

As a Poet I understand
The value of words.
I don't waste many;
Not that conversational.
Some people call me
Unfriendly.

Some people they
Talk about nothing
Just to make conversation.
They talk and talk
About absolutely nothing,
Never have a clue
Of the words they're wasting.

Eight-thirty this morning
Landlord rings the doorbell,
Wakes me from a sound sleep.
I tried to go back
But the dog started barking.
I got up and let him in.
He's a nice guy
But he talked and talked.
All I could think about
Was the currency that was escaping
From his big fat mouth.

here lies confusion by Michael Grover

Here lies confusion,
Confusion corner.
Big roundabout,
One of the biggest landmarks
In this lazy southern town,

One of the only places
You can taste chaos around here.

Bells ring,
Red lights flash,
Train horn blows,
Cars stack up
Around the curb,
Train lumbers on slow.

There are some days I say
This small town livin' is saving me.
But who wants to be saved?
Most days it drives me crazy,
Leaves me jonesing for the energy
Of any big city,
Anywhere but here,
Sitting on confusion corner
Watching the cars go through.

new mexico by Michael Grover

Cross country across the ten
Jacksonville to LA
Escaping bondage
That drugs me down
Finding my own
Way to freedom

PBJ meals in the front seat
Sunset to sunrise over big Texas plain
Sleeping three hours a night in rest stops
I decided I needed a real meal

Stopped at a Denny's in New Mexico
Wearing the same clothes
For two thousand miles now
Cute punk-looking waitress
Takes one look at me
"You're going to California"
"Yeah" I answer
"Where'd you drive from?"
"Florida"
"I'd like to move to LA sometime
I've been saving my money"
I think of the road I've driven
Look her in the eye
"What's stopping you
You're practically there"

I order a moon over my hammy

With no ham
Which translates to
An egg and cheese sandwich
On toasted sourdough

She brings me the check
And wishes me the best
Enviess my freedom
While she is so close
Trapped in a dead end
Truck stop Denny's in New Mexico

David S Cross interviews himself



Q. David, first let me say I really enjoyed your work on that TV show.

A. That wasn't me.

Q. Ya, sure it was. I remember names alright: David Cross – you're a funny guy!

A. That's a different fellow

Q. Oh, I see...you create a different persona for yourself when you're writing, like Chinaski.

A. No, it's just me. Another guy has the same name but without the "S" in the middle.

Q. And what's his name?

A. Who?

Q. The other David Cross

A. Yes

are we there yet? by David S Cross

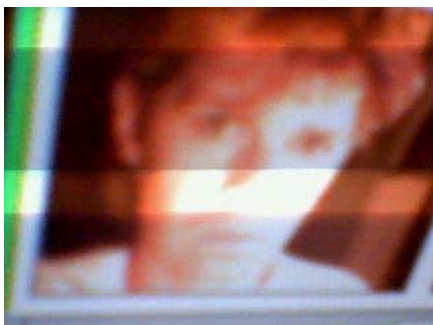
I always felt
I was never quite there
Where I wanted to be
Where I should be, could be
But always existing
Just on the fringe
Of that place
Lurking in the shadows
On the periphery
Living a life

Not quite there
 A life not at all
 Like the life
 I thought of
 Long ago
 When I actually
 Thought about living
 Thought what a life
 Might be
 Someday

Then it all broke
 Fell to pieces
 And I felt nothing
 I did not think
 About life; not quite there
 Nor about life where I was
 Or wanted to be

When I finally picked up the pieces
 Reassembled life's bits
 I felt as I always felt
 Still not quite there

Jackson Pollock interviews John Sweet



pollock: why the hell do you keep writing poems about me?!

sweet: because you're my favorite poet.

pollock: but i'm a painter, you dumbass! and a semi-literate one, at that!

sweet: but still.....

pollock: no - no "but"! stop writing about me! do something else! get drunk! get laid! Just leave me alone!

sweet: ummm.. aren't you supposed to be asking me questions?

pollock: i said LEAVE ME ALONE!

and these are violent times by John Sweet

And eleven hours later, I'm 400 miles away from home and sitting at the bar. I've read my poems to indifferent silence and now I'm sitting at the bar drinking a coke. The guy that read before me is sitting to my left, and of course we've never heard of each other, and we have nothing to say. I thought his work sucked and he had no comments on mine that he cared to share. He's on his third vodka and cranberry juice and goes outside between drinks to smoke.

To my right is the woman who arranged the reading, tall, cute, straight dark hair and wire-rimmed glasses. Walked up to me when I first got here with my notebook and my backpack and introduced herself, says she's the Nicole who had emailed me, says she loves my work and I smile, my legs still stiff and awkward after too much time in the car. And she gives me \$75 in crumpled fives and tens, my paycheck for the night, enough for a cheap motel and gas. My backpack has some clothes in it, and a stack of CDs, and a bag of animal crackers. I have a cooler in the back seat of the car with soda and some frozen bottles of water, a couple of apples, a bunch of grapes. My plan is to be up at six the next morning and get the hell out of here.

And the money is still in my pocket because Nicole's paying for the drinks. She has a beer in front of her and we're eating pretzels from a bowl. The last poet of the night, a woman whose name I vaguely recognize, is reading a long piece, is gesturing dramatically, and I turn around on my barstool to watch her. The crowd is rapt, Nicole smiling with her eyes closed. The guy on the other side of me has gone back outside.

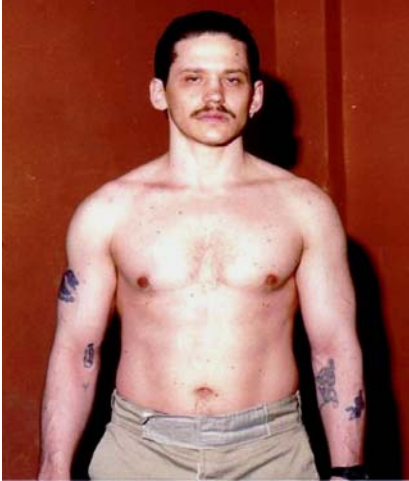
And later, after it's all over and we've all been belatedly introduced, everyone has gone their separate ways. Five poets disappeared into the night, and the man and the woman who had helped Nicole organize everything, and now her and I are the only ones left, the two of us sitting at a small table in the corner of the room, and she's switched to rum and cokes, and I've switched to bottled water. And she's got her shoes off, is sitting across from me with her feet up in my lap. Is leaning in and raising her voice over the sound of Springsteen on the bar's sound system blasting through the chorus to *Rosalita*. Is telling me about a relationship she was in with another woman, says she just broke it off, says *I miss being with a man, you know? I miss being fucked like that*, and I'm thinking about my wife at home with the girls, the three of them asleep in our bed. I'm thinking about how shitty things have been lately, how she told me last week that it wasn't working out. How she wished me luck when I called her from the motel to tell her that I'd made it here alive. The sound of her voice from another planet.

And I look at my watch and it's just after midnight, and say I should be getting back to my motel. I feel Nicole's toes sliding up and down my legs. I offer her a ride home.

And I jerk awake at six to the sound of the alarm clock that I brought, reach over and turn it off. Lay back in bed listening to my heart pound. Move my left hand under the covers and it brushes Nicole's naked thigh, and I feel myself starting to get hard. She murmurs something, moves closer, reaches out and starts stroking my cock. Asks if I can stay a little longer.

And it's nine o'clock when I pull onto the highway. Left Nicole in the parking lot of the bar, waited to make sure she got her car started, then went to get some gas. Called home on my cell phone, but no one answered. Thought about leaving a message, but didn't know what to say. And I dig through my backpack looking for some music and come up with Nicole's panties, which she must have stuck in there when I was showering, and I stare at them. Black and lacy, and I'll have to ditch them at a rest area. I'll have to change the password on my email account. And I squint into the weight of the sun and drive.

Clayton Fountain interviews Steve Ely



- CF:** You're a limey square john never done a bit in your life. The hell gives you the right to write about the joint, about guys like me?
- SE:** I write about what I have to. It's where my head lives, where my heart takes me. Something grabs hold of me, an idea, an experience and that's it, I run with it, transform it in the imagination, make it mine. By the time pen hits paper, it's not about guys like you – you're just *content* - it's about me.
- CF:** Just *content*, huh? You better watch your mouth, fake-ass tough guy. You got to be makin' a million from this. Where's my end?
- SE:** Up that cell-bitch's ass, what I hear – remember Lewisberg?
- CF:** (*Leaps up from his chair.*) MUTHAFUCKA! I'll tear out your fuckin' windpipe -
- SE:** Hey bro', cool it. Don't forget, you're dead, up there in heaven with those monks that turned you at Springfield. You're supposed to be setting an example.
- CF:** I guess. Shit. (*Resumes sitting.*) That goddamn temper of mine.
- SE:** That was always your problem bro'. Isn't that what I have you say in *JerUSAlem*?
- CF:** Yeah. (*Sighs.*) *JerUSAlem*. That's the greatest literary work of the twenty first century. I know that for a fact because I'm in heaven and I got a kick-ass overview. You gotta have a publishin' deal for that by now?
- SE:** It ain't happening bro'.
- CF:** Those guys are assholes.
- SE:** Yeah.

J-A-C-K by Steve Ely

"I would just like an apology of some sort. A little consideration. Just a small recognition by society of the injustice that has been done to me." (Jack Henry Abbott)

That's the conundrum; how can a man
so talented be bad? How can a man
who writes so well be allowed to rot in jail?
(I didn't consider the reverse propositions;
that the dully mediocre can never be virtuous,
mere hackwork is an imprisonable crime.)
He robbed a bank: so what? It wasn't as if
they couldn't absorb the loss, they didn't have insurance.
Did he leave any bodies? Did he leave lives in ruins,

like the guys from the Savings & Loans?
 It was prison that made him a killer,
 that and his brutal state raised youth.
 Take him out of that environment,
 nurture his talent, instead of trying
 to break his spirit, you've got an American
 Jean Genet, a white Eldridge Cleaver.

They blame me now, and I can understand that.
 In a way, I sprung him. But everyone was doing it.
 Len Bernstein had the Panthers round for cocktails
 and fried chicken. Was I naïve? I guess I was.
 I had no idea of the depth of the scarring
 he'd suffered, this son of a Chinese whore
 abandoned to the reformatory,
 the *in loco parentis* savagery
 of his 'carers'. But doesn't the lotus bloom
 from the mud, the phoenix rise from the flames?
 Dostoevsky served hard time in the slammer.
 Ditto Chester Himes, Malcolm X, Eddie Bunk.
 There was a time when some of these guys
 would've shanked you soon as look at you;
 see what they became when they picked up the pen.
 You can't tell me there's no redemption,
 that even those we call the worst can't change.

He tattooed *J-A-C-K* on his hard left fist,
 his first and defining literary work;
 asserting himself to himself and then
 to the jailhouse world. He carved it
 on that waiter's heart and smashed it in my face.
 Re-reading *Beast*, it seems obvious now
 that he wasn't *that* good: sure, the sparks fly
 off the page, but the energy's borne of hate;
 too much tendentious Marxism, too much militant ego.
 Guess I got carried away by the *zeitgeist*.
 Turned out he was bad through and through.

Jack Henry Abbott was a convict who began a correspondence with writer Norman Mailer. Convinced Abbott was a major talent, Mailer helped him gain parole and wrote the introduction for Abbott's first book, In the Belly of the Beast. Six weeks out of prison, Abbott stabbed and killed waiter Richard Adan because he refused to allow him to use a staff toilet at the restaurant in which he was eating.

tookie by Steve Ely

"I am guilty of being black." (Stanley 'Tookie' Williams)

Right up to the end, you said you didn't do it.

Sam Coleman said you did:
you said the cops coerced his testimony,
broke his ribs with nightsticks, left him unconscious
in a pool of his own congealing blood.

James and Esther and Alfred and George said you did:
career criminals, you said,
giving perjured testimony to save their own skins.

The jury said you did:
you said they poisoned the jury pool
with armed escape conspiracy lies;
you said all the jurors were white;
you said your white lawyers were incompetent.

The judge said you did:
he sentenced you to die.
You said he was another white man,
dealing a brother a dead man's hand.

You founded the Crips:
how many black men did *you* kill?

Death row focused your mind.
You saw the error of your ways
and gave up the gangsta life.

You said you'd changed.

Barbara Becnel believed you.
Winnie and Desmond believed you.
Mike Farrell believed you.

Maybe they believed you were innocent as well,
or maybe that was beside the point:
you were a black man,
sentenced to die by a racist white society;
for some, that wipes the slate.

You wrote a book for black kids,
telling them, *stay in school*
and keep away from gangs;
I bought it for my son, a white kid
in a suburb, on his PS2 mostly.

He liked it. He thought you looked a bad-ass

with your twenty inch biceps
and Tito Jackson 'fro.

They made a film,
you wrote more books,
you got a campaign and a website.
The Swiss put you up for a Nobel Prize.

The cops thought it was baloney.
They kept busting your ass for gang subversion.

Schwarzenegger had the final say.
He said that you did it, and that you hadn't changed.

Or maybe you had, but it didn't matter.

They killed you.

I read your book only after you were dead.
You never described your murders.
I don't mean the ones you said you didn't do.

Stanley 'Tookie' Williams was co-founder of the notorious L.A. street gang 'the Crips'. Sentenced to death in 1981 for four murders he insisted he did not commit, he was executed in California's San Quentin Prison on 13th December, 2005.

Crap Vampire interviews Pablo Vision



Crap Vampire: what is your favourite thing to eat?

Pablo Vision: my favourite thing to eat is not food.

Crap Vampire: what is your favourite number?

Pablo Vision: I do not have a favourite number. I am, however, of the opinion that 239 is the most melancholy of the three digit numbers.

Crap Vampire: what do you like best out of sultanas or Santana?

Pablo Vision: Santana from 1969 is better than sultanas from 1969. Sultanas from the present are better than Santana from recent times.

a day in the life by Pablo Vision

Her hand moves slowly, from my breasts, and over my stomach, with exquisite touch, and tantalising purpose. There is an agonizing moment where she stops. I thrust my sex towards that hand and those fingers. She slowly moves back up. My desire is overwhelming, but she is in control; her mouth busy sucking, and teasing, at my swollen nipples. And then the fingers touch my sex-lips, sliding and probing; her middle finger over my clitoris; the urgency of my need, pressing into her hand and her fingers. John passes me a memo, and I say thanks, and tell him that coffee would be nice, maybe some doughnuts too. I smile at him briefly, but enough of a smile for him to ignore that I am not his boss, and to guarantee my mid-morning sustenance. My eyes return to the screen, to see what I am doing now.

Her tongue is like an electric eel, teasing my sex, and my anus. She lowers herself towards my mouth, and my lips, and my tongue. I begin to replicate what she is doing to me. And then there is another message on screen. I translate and speak my instructions into the microphone, to the other me. It is unusual to get many messages when we are in private; the men's hands are generally too preoccupied to be typing on the keyboard. I tell the other girl to move her head, and use her fingers to open me wide, and display all my wanting, and my wet pinkness, to the camera; more beautiful than any flower, and more disgusting than an endoscopic image. And then he wants her to use the dildo on me. Not the elegant glass phallus, but the big jet-black cock, and he is shouting in big capitals, fuck her up the ass, fuck her up the ass. Your wish is our command is one of our many mottos, so I issue the new instructions.

And then he logs off. Maybe he has shot his load, and become concerned about the damage to his credit card; maybe a car has pulled up outside – a parent, or a wife; or a work colleague walking in, or a job ending message from the IT department. He will be back. John returns with the coffee and a bag of doughnuts. We sit talking about some film that he has seen. He can't remember what it was called, but it had that actor in it, what's-his-name. Conversations with John are always riveting.

Then it is on to free-view. This is harder. I have to act as both the moderator, and the words of the Eastern European girls who will do this kind of thing for much less money than the good-looking English speaking girls. So much less so, that they can afford to pay me to do this. So I am me, and I am Natasha, and I am Mod34. It sounds kind of hard, but it is like Tetris, you soon get the hang of it. You don't have to reply to everything, and you don't have to get the girls to do much, just get them to show enough for someone to click the Go Private button. It doesn't take long, normally, but there are times when you have guys or boys, who are going to be able to get their rocks off, just talking dirty to a girl, or watching the promise of what might be. This time we have also got a smart-ass joker online. And this is how it's going on screen:

Guest12> you are beautiful
 Guest45> show ass babay
 Guest25> take off yr top pls
 BenDover6> i want to ram my cock in you
 Guest34> How old are you baby?
 Guest45> ass ass ass ass ass ass ass ass ass ass
 Guest 49> what do you like best out of sultanas or Santana?
 Guest12> you are so beautiful
 Natasha> 18
 Guest29> i wanna see yr tits
 Guest25> just a quick flash and then go private
 Guest49> what do you like best out of Santa or Satan?
 BenDover6> you think you could take all of me sweetheart?

Guest34> You look younger
 Guest16> quero chupar muito
 Guest49> I'd take you in my mouth Ben
 Guest25> open your legs and show me the honey if you want money
 Natasha> just turned 18
 Natasha> only in PRIVATE
 BenDover6> you fucking faggot cunt
 Guest45> ASS ASS ASS ASS ASS ASS ASS ASS ASS ASS ASS
 Mod34> WARNING - Play nice!!
 Guest33> show me yr pussy
 Guest49> kiss and make up Ben
 Guest34> What will you do in private?
 BenDover6> i'm going to fucking kill you cunt
 Guest52> w w w . h o t t e n c r e a m p i e . c o m no spaces no credit card details

I select Guest52, Guest49, and BenDover for removal from chat, but not before:

Guest49> I just want to kiss your little winky. But how you going to find me?

I try and get this show back on the road. I issue myself instructions to give a flash of tit.

Natasha> anything goes in private
 Guest45> ass ASS ass ASS ass ASS ass ASS ass ASS ass ASS
 Guest34> Are you shaven like a little girl?

Someone other than this group of freeloading losers goes private. I take away my face and my body from the frustrated men, and deprive them of the 20 'A's and 40 'S's that Guest45 has just fruitlessly typed. I masturbate to the camera, and for MormonBates2, and take another bite of doughnut. I wonder how disappointed he must have been to discover that there was already a MormonBates1 signed up.

It is time for my break, and John is lingering around. This is because he would like to be with me, but is too shy to say so. I find it kind of charming that he is so uncomfortable around me, when we do the work that we do. He has got pictures of his family up on the wall; family who thinks that he is some kind of Internet genius. The Internet part is right, I guess. I tell John I need some fresh air. Normally I would not mind spending time with him, he's sweet enough, but I need to be alone, and prepare for the next session.

I stand outside smoking, and look up at my office; two sheets of paper are stuck to the window showing 34. I think, not for the first time, that maybe 34 more days of this is too many days, then I think of the money, and I think that maybe I will stay on. When John asks what the countdown is for, I just tell him that I like figures, and watch him struggle not to say that he likes my figure too. The countdown unnerves him, but not enough for him to act rashly. Not yet.

I go back inside to be a girl of fourteen, with white piss-soaked panties that I will remove for faithful husbands and curious eyes, from all around the world. Globalisation and sex, supply and demand, I think, as I take another bite of doughnut.

Eddie Kilowatt interviews himself



Q: What are you listening to?

A: Atlas by Battles off of Mirrored

Q: What would you rather be doing right now?

A: Regretting an abortion. Changed music to Built to Spill.

Q: What was the last book you read?

A: Raymond Carver's collected poems, All of Us. I like that guy.

Q: What's your latest epiphany?

A: I didn't leave soon enough. Now I'm listening to Gun Club.

going to see the surf god by Eddie Kilowatt

as a boy

my best friend Matt

had a favorite Uncle Don.

Matt would tell me

stories about Uncle Don

that made him sound like a

superhuman surf god

born out of mythology and

living on Daytona Beach.

sometimes Matt would even
get a postcard in the mail
and he would read to me what
Don had written
as though he was relaying
a secret transmission
between spies.

one year over Christmas
Matt's family
went to visit Uncle Don.

When they got back
I went over to their house
to watch a movie and
sleep
over.
the movie was about to start
when I asked how visiting
Uncle Don had
went

Matt's dad crossed and uncrossed his legs, then
huffed and stood up,

walked in to the kitchen and

made a lot of noise

opening and closing

drawers.

Matt's sisters stared at the fireplace,

eating popcorn

one piece at a time.

Matt looked down at the carpet.

I looked between all of them

several times

while the fireplace popped.

Matt was picking at the carpet with his fingers.

I was about to ask again, when

Matt's mom said,

The hotel we stayed in was

very nice, *wasn't it girls!*

The girls murmured

something

Matt's dad walked through the room

wearing a jacket
with keys in his hand
and said he was going to shovel snow.
I didn't see him any more
that
night.

I never heard any more stories about
Uncle
Don

the boss's wife by Eddie Kilowatt

We left his house
walking to the job site
but when we got there
he realized
he'd left the checkbook
at
home.

He called his wife
to say I'd be coming by
for the checkbook.

When I got there

the boss's wife
was wearing makeup and was
in a very good mood, with
two cups of tea
on the kitchen table.

I never
told my boss
about
that.