

HOMAGE TO THE GREAT AUK

Eons extinct, the Trilobite
Has little further need to fight.

Deader than dead, the Dodo, too,
No longer flees from me or you.

Tasmanian devils do not mate,
Having succumbed long since to Fate.

The line of Eryops, quite effete,
Scuffles no more for what to eat.

These long-gone breeds at present see
No need to mate, eat, fight, or flee.

Why is it, then, that Dinosaurs
Are suddenly big movie stars?

—G. N. GABBARD

MIND OVER MATTER

Percy, the pink-eyed panther,
crouched on a lower limb,
and wished likell a young gazelle
would saunter under him.

Since mind rules over matter,
it wasn't long until
a dainty thing with eyes like spring
enticed him to the kill.

He sprang. She sprained her ankle
and sighed and said, "Oh dear,
you big, sweet cat, help me to that
soft mossy bank down here."

She rolled her eyes at Percy
till pink-eyed Percy purred.
And so we find what governs mind
as if you hadn't heard.

—LAURENCE PRATT

FIREFLY

Meet a small
favorite of mine,
a beetle who
was born to shine.

He starts as egg
beneath the mold
and there he glows
in dark and cold.

When summer warms
that glimmering nub
out crawls
a phosphorescent grub.

This pupa-pupil
earns degree
in neon, flight
and chivalry.

A dandy slim
soon strolls through space
with eye alert
for female grace,

youth's humble glow
now beaming far
with plea as winning
as guitar.

And signaling
above the gorse
in code superior
to Morse

he woos the miss
upon the blade
with pyrotechnic
serenade.

—JOAN DREW RITCHINGS

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

I've haddock with you!
What's the porpoise of that?
You think I'm hooked on you?
Yes, beyond a shadow of a trout.
You think you're some catch, don't you?
Yes, we're sole mates.
Don't give me that line.
Have I lost my lure?

—CHARLES GHIGNA

POOL RULES

Welcome to the hotel pool,
Please observe each posted rule:
No black socks of any kind
Wing tips must be left behind
Tug your swim trunks up a tad
Lose the yellow legal pad
Email's not a water sport
Conference calls will be cut short
Don't wear name tags when you swim
Don't wear plaid unless it's dim
Flip your clip-on glasses down
Get that dress shirt out of town
Skimpy bathing suits are wrong
Don't dare think about a thong
Take your briefcase back inside
Don't write memos on the slide
Turn that calculator off
See a doctor for that cough
Sun tan lotion must be worn
Thickish back hair should be shorn
Mind the heat, we always say,
Let's stay cool out there today!

—DAN SKWIRE

DEARLY DEPARTED

I
He liked to say he'd tried his best.
I hope his soul has earned its rest,
for while he tried a lot of stuff
his best was never good enough.

II
He always got the final word.
A pity that he never heard
the warning shout before the blow--
he was too busy talking. So,
now that he's silently interred,
his tombstone reads, "Look out below!"

III
God, forgive your departed servant,
condescending, snide, and arrogant.
Grant me humility that I might
forgive him the sin of being right.

IV
She had the most exhaustive store
of where she'd been and what she knew.
On every subject she understood more;
she'd been there, done that, ahead of you.
I imagine she's been to Hell before
and is telling Lucifer what to do.

—CAROL TAYLOR

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