

## A Note for S.

is it worth being  
subtracted from  
the adding arms of  
your family for  
your family, that  
wife & kid you  
shout your own, I  
think now of how  
I used to hitchhike  
down from Maine to  
CT on college breaks  
music videos, a  
million cans of beer  
we always had such a  
slamming time, but  
somewhere you gave  
up, as if your new  
kid had eaten that  
part your wife  
missed, cruel now  
even to your older  
sister, the one who  
held your hand up to  
keep traffic from  
running you down  
who wonders how she  
missed the larger  
accidents, how she  
could have kept life  
from closing over  
you like a corpse's  
sigh: are you leaving  
us forever, brother  
or is this just one  
more death to add to  
the morgue that  
caresses this  
mortuary family?

Emil P. Dill

## i don't want the job.

the silence  
at the other end  
of the phone  
spoke more clearly  
than words:  
amazement  
wonder

"I can't believe  
you're walking  
away from this job.  
It's a good job.  
Are you sure?"

i thought  
of all the years  
i had already worked  
as a back  
a grunt  
a muscle  
i thought  
of an old man  
who worked  
41 years  
dying  
of brain cancer  
one year  
into retirement  
i considered  
the words  
his mouth  
beneath dull eyes

drummed into my head  
—  
"It's not worth it.  
Nothings worth it."

yeah  
i'm sure  
i replied

"Well..."  
O.K.  
Give me a holler  
if you change your mind.  
You're a good man."

O.K.  
i will

after i hung up  
i went outside  
& walked  
with the noon sun  
in my eyes  
& my steel toed boots  
stepped on every crack

breaking  
people's  
backs.

T. Thrasher

## indelicate with bloom

the fires deepen with a silver dread,  
while quakes and altercations swell outside  
and the cancer of politics plays like poor opera,  
you and i sit naked, saying our prayers  
by applying our bodies together in time.  
blown like glass, we wait to cool  
listening to the choppers wisk the sky,  
still unready to open the door  
and return to the womb  
of the war.

Raymond Tod Smith

## Last Supper

It didn't roll as he recalled  
Like angry mealtime thunderheads  
Across a sterile table top,  
But was a pressure front that seeped  
From lintel posts and ceiling joists,  
Down dreary walls where trivets hung —  
Christ in this kitchen no one felt  
The small events of children's days  
Poised like held bread, aborted in  
Sharp talk and bottled rage

John Sherry

# **fuel**

## **[#9]**

