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OPEN MIKE NIGHT

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Pub
FLAMINGO
AND SOHO GRILL

CKDU 97.5 FM

Pub poets perform on demand

Sweaty poetry write-off

by BTHill

Streams of Consciousness from the middle of the very first Grawood Poetry Sweatshop, Tuesday, September 27.

I see lots of poets sitting nervous but pretty. I know some of these people. They told me and I told some of them to come tonight. I know some other people here. They came to eat and drink. I don't know the rest. Alex Gigeroff, programme director and general campus rat, introduces the rules, bla, bla, bla . . . a page from thesaurus, bla bla, bla . . . 30 minutes, bla, bla, bla . . . Go!

We started and everyone's talking at my table. "Maxine", "Ziggy", "Frances Malone" and "Boots" (that's me). A bit tense. We're at a small table and this ain't bridge. No little sandwiches with the crusts cut off. Julie is the first to break away and hit the rug. I hit the jackpot. Near the middle of my thesaurus page I find "see circumscription, limit, subjection, retention, punishment, dissuasion." I go for dissuasion, lots of sweat, beer, "Ziggy" hits the floor and my food arrives — a Chimo burger I designed myself, sauerkraut, Cajun sauce, fresh mushrooms and fries. Thanks.

The woman at the next table takes over while I eat. She writes, "The woman at the next table comments on how gross my meal looks and I guess I have to admit it does look pretty bad . . . I pounce my burger anyhow. Yet another woman shrieks as she is "thrown" into a writer's block . . ." I can't read the rest through the Cajun sauce, improvise.

Finished. The burger, the poem. Still got half a beer left, sweat is pouring. I wish for naked. (Poetry, eh?)

Soon. It's over. 30 minutes up. I'm hot but clothed.

Some comments. (We're waiting for Maxine Tynes to adjudicate) . . .

"Worst piece of trash I ever wrote." (a sure winner)

"We all should have been more drunk." (kids these days)

"My ribs are sore from lying on the carpet." (Julie)

"Hey, things are looking up, Terry's buying rounds." (me again)

Best poet in the house is serving beer. I recognize him from the English department. Oops, better get a lid on these barfly sentiments.

Finally. The top ten, "Bud Egg", "King King", "Fish", "Wilson the Sheep", "Kathy" (she left earlier), "Dino", "Edward Noon", "Boot" — say what! me? I walk up, shaking, read, shark. read. shake to finish. I'm shaking while "Ann Smith" talks through her poem. I'm calmer but that's not a word. Last call . . . "Jim" (she left too). Alex fills in.

Okay. Maxine is checking out the winners, top three. I want the money; the Bukowski persona is edging me off my stool. More beer.

Unspoken

God walks into the bar

And saunters over to the counter

Orders a bitters

What luck!

I have a million questions to ask
And Im in need of a good healing, too.

My God,
It's gotten complex.
How does anyone arrive
At a peaceful resolution
Even with themselves?

But God has a perfect plan
He could sterilize us all
And make us perfect too.

Instead, he's only speaking
in Hebrew

And my questions remain
Unspoken.

by Andre Norbonne ("Dino")

Humbug

The sky is black and blue — a
potential flurry of snow hovering
above us.

We huddle, in our thick winter
coats,

Standing on our own corner.

The three of us,

far away from the howl

and the hullabaloo of downtown.

In this city of humans

we can hum together, with

no one to hear under the

huge hug of

the sky.

by Heather Adams ("Kathy")

habit of non-birth at the abbey

abbey . . . abeo

a beowulf in the background?

perhaps amongst the others.

hear their stories,

kept short to get it all on the

stones — rid of fear or other silly

sentimental details.

count the headstones

buried deep, he doesn't feel Meorot Hall

quaking is the wind, buffeted by

the monster's whims.

kindly Dane, dead now but so young

count the headstones.

in the land, below your heart

behind your eyes. you had sinned;

had you revealed to all the men

in black behind the curtain

(Hail Mary mother of God, Hail Mary . . .)

or did God leave your soul behind

to be eaten with the rest

by the worms. or had you sinned yet?

count the headstones

and they are small stones

to commemorate small lives.

few have names for few were

named.

abbey — abba

father please; wish that i could do

something

anything, that you would take me

back.

count the headstones

i am lost, i am found

i am six feet underground

i am tossed, i am torn

i am dead and yet unborn.

dig in with both hands — and pull out

a little life . . .

by Roy MacLean ("Wilson the Sheep")



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