



September 2018

Dennis Ross poetry submission

Dennis Ross
Iowa State University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview>

 Part of the [Fiction Commons](#), [Nonfiction Commons](#), [Photography Commons](#), and the [Poetry Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Ross, Dennis (2018) "Dennis Ross poetry submission," *Westview*: Vol. 34 : Iss. 1 , Article 29.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol34/iss1/29>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Westview by an authorized administrator of SWOSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu.



Christmas at Walgreens

People are buying last-minute
candy, cards, wine for the hostess
and ahead of me in line stands
an unshaven man in thin jacket
and knee-length shorts
in spite of the bitter Iowa cold.

A small boy in a blue wind-
breaker, dirty with a tear
in back, hugs the man's thighs
like he never wants to let go,
and says, "I sure like to be
with you on Christmas dad."
"Me too sport", he answers.

On the counter rest two
small Hot Wheels cars, two
containers of chocolate milk,
a pack of cigarettes. The boy
points to each item, "that's mine,
that's mine, that's mine,
that's yours, that's yours, but you
don't have a present dad."
He lifts the boy, "Oh Sammy,
you're my present."

Flying Woman

The horses stand asleep in the pasture
and the full moon tacks between clouds,
even the bluebells doze in the grass.

Where are you this luminous night
made for drifting like a will-o-wisp
or a song through the tree branches?

I feel earth-bound now for many years,
a long ache dragging stone feet.
Come again woman of the quiet night,

of the moon, and the sacred grove,
and help me fly again and soar,
or were you too only part of a dream?

Two Hunters

My son and I met two hunters
carrying .22 rifles with slings, a boy
about nine in a red plaid hunting coat
and a man in a wheelchair in a camo
jacket and cap saying U.S. Army.
They were battling their way over a stile
in a fence which crossed the trail
three-quarters of a mile from the parking lot.
The wheelchair and boy were across,
the man was pulling himself up and over,
dead legs dangling, powerful arms, sweat.
His glance precluded any offer of help.

He said it sure was nice being out
in the Fall woods doing a little hunting.
The boy looked at him as you would a hero.
They were enjoying each other's company,
hunting and finding something important
well beyond any rare rabbit or squirrel.

We later marveled at how far he had
propelled that wheelchair over a trail
with tree roots and two steep hills.
Deep desire, strength, determination.

Gazebo in the Park

Walnut shells are centered
on the concrete gazebo floor
all within a small circle.

A small child's gathered treasure?

I slip away to the lawn
and the world pond quiets.
A grizzled squirrel carries in a walnut,
holds it like a chalice, gnaws out the nut,
and leaves the shell within the circle,
then repeats herself time and again.

A squirrel shaman? An artist?
An eccentric?

If I dump a bag of shelled walnuts
into the circle,
would I encourage a new religion,
reward an artist,
or just froth the mind of Crazy Alice?

The Red White and Blue Pony

always disappeared behind a barn
or haystack just before Susan looked,
stretching up to see from the car window,
but her teasing sisters always saw it.
Susan looked hard, really wanted
a glimpse but was just too late.

Now wrinkled with white hair
and unsteady walk, she has worked
in Eastern Europe, has seen the Three
Rivers Dam in China, geyser fields
in Iceland, ancient icons at
the Hermitage Museum in Russia
questing for the hidden magic
of the red white and blue pony
always just beyond the next rise.

One explorer wanted only a glimpse
of a snow leopard in the Himalayas
and settled for seeing the blue sheep.
Others seek a Grand Unified Theory
or the perfect jewel of language.
Only the search matters. Even
an imaginary pony or apocryphal
chalice can give you the world.