



6-15-2006

Daydreamer

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Recommended Citation

Alsberg, Fred (2006) "Daydreamer," *Westview*: Vol. 25 : Iss. 1 , Article 14.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol25/iss1/14>

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Daydreamer

by Fred Alsberg

When in Geography
Mr. Glarrow droned about places
on a map he'd lowered,
I would spy out the window
a leaf take flight
on a sudden current of the breeze;
lifting free, it would surge and sink,
then surge again,
until at last it sank past tangled trees
and matted underbrush
onto the path
I'd hacked with my machete.
Wearing khakis and safari hat,
with slung over my back a carbine
and the smallest of packs,
I'd brush aside hanging vines
to scan the high canopy
where yellow-green leaves
would blend with olive-gray,
forest-green with purplish-rose.
Through humid air, ripe with decay,
would come the reverberant cries
of unseen birds and monkeys,
then, behind me, sounds of their resettling.
With branches swishing against legs and chest,
I'd peer through the snarl of twining plants
for palaces and temples long ago
abandoned by their inhabitants,
yet just as among lush ferns and fronds
I'd discover crumbling gray-stone facades,
marble pools overgrown with reeds and algae,
their great, toppled, gargoyle-like gods,
I'd be hit dead-center,
with a well-aimed, blackboard eraser.

