



12-15-1995

Fat Tuesday

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Recommended Citation

Luftig, Richard (1995) "Fat Tuesday," *Westview*: Vol. 15 : Iss. 2 , Article 15.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol15/iss2/15>

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FAT TUESDAY

by Richard Luftig

A threadbare squirrel,
foxed and scratched weary
with winter, has traveled
from the edge of annihilation
to my weathered bird feeder.
He hangs upside down
like a trapeze artist,
tail curled in a question,
gnashing seeds in his teeth.

Standing below in the last
swatches of snow that lie
in sooty heaps, his mate
waits, her back a safety
net, nibbling leftovers
that fall in gritty rain.

They have already spent
their Lenten season
in a tug-o-war with March.
Now, they gambol
with Spring, toasting
one more survival
in a slow banquet of grains.