

# The Giltweasel

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Sturgeon            by            John Gurney

Out on the Delta  
a sturgeon rises to the surface  
It could have been a prehistoric God  
this magnificent fish  
enormous as dolphins  
twisting and boiling  
the surface of the water  
and all the time me  
looking on in amazement  
in awe  
as one who has seen a vision  
or rather a creature  
restored from antiquity  
and reanimated here  
for disappearing seconds.

You certainly couldn't call it a pretty fish  
strange sculptured shape  
with bones and cartilage pressed against skin  
black, leathery  
head sloped and angular  
stretching out to small dark eyes  
the tentacles that dangle  
about the curious mouth.

For a moment I wish I had a camera  
a hook  
a way to possess the great fish  
to make it my own  
but that is not why I came.

I don't seek possession  
but rather communion  
a plea for forgiveness  
an understanding of extinctions  
and vertebrae  
the movement of fish  
water and time.

In my boat  
I'm still drinking beer  
and thinking about caviar  
the eggs we steal from her belly

eating the salty children  
before they are even conceived  
and I wish I had her caviar now  
and champagne  
and a beautiful woman  
to share them with  
to make love here  
on the water  
to spawn like fish on the surface of the night  
water lapping bodies  
like the caress of a lovers mouth  
and all the while  
dreaming of that enormous fish  
that dark ghastly form  
black and boiling, turning still  
surging into the night  
like the spring melt of the Missouri  
thundering to the sea  
and beyond!

At night I would dream about those waters  
body tossed in eddies and currents  
flotsam and jetsam  
debris  
washed in from a passing summers storm  
and again  
I try to recall  
the size of that fish  
the majesty of its girth  
the amazing stretch of spine  
the force of serrated tail  
and twisting fins.

what had it been 150, 200 pounds?  
It doesn't matter  
I will never know  
or understand  
where it is that a sturgeon travels

nor the sun escaping  
liquid as mercury  
into the darkened water  
of that patient Delta.

Carl Boster

ORANGE GIRL

thank you.  
orange girl, are you about to walk? I  
will help.  
because you did  
and would do again  
the same for me.

Carl Boster

IMPRISONED UNDER

embroided flowered lid, i look inside.  
crystal clear i glide.  
blue ceramic glare  
hardened face  
reddened cry  
must get by. horse's ruby mane,  
untamed,  
run the field. the open field,  
the clouds encumber.  
- holding still  
cloud's thunder.  
- i stand still  
cloud's rain.  
- i slip under  
to...fly.  
motions away - dying flower.  
kept under. imprisoned.  
imprisoned under the white plastered roof.  
no reason.

John Amato

You can call me Honey

(Can be sung to slow Blues)

9/1/95

As a telephone,  
I'd call  
you Baby,  
every night.  
At home,  
I'd leave a message,  
Handsome,  
on the telephone,  
hoping your machine  
wouldn't turn as red as wine.  
I would call you  
Honey, later  
when it's  
time for bed.  
I left you a message,  
Sweetheart, don't forget the bread.

---

Steve Parks

A Survey

I take a survey  
I lean out my window  
man hits woman  
woman cries  
person hit by taxi  
lots of facial hair  
a large growth on a guys neck  
a woman with a huge red blotch  
on her nose  
Seen enough  
survey error plus or minus  
five percent

Pb Sanderson

what i thought meant god

Before, I thought  
that just the note  
coming out of my mouth  
meant there was some little  
god inside of me, a silent  
particle that meant  
sooner or later  
I'd touch my lips  
and they'd heal themselves.

But late that evening, when  
I reached across the grass  
and took a dandelion by the roots,  
plucked it like someone's  
virginity with the sticky white sap  
coiling down my wrist  
I decided to stop fooling myself.

All I could really do  
was make a wish and blow  
the seeds along the wind,  
imagining what it would be like to have wings.

---

Steve Parks

To Stride Purposefully

The hyenas at the bar  
in their monkey suits  
aping sobriety  
swinging on each other  
cackling like magpies  
at their witticism  
were in the highest class  
to judge by their breeding  
and when the gluttony was finished  
they grabbed their brief case  
and strode purposefully into the street.



John Gurney

Minor Deities

They arrive as minor deities  
one by one  
entering the room  
to assume their place among the Greek urns  
and scattered cherubs  
for a time  
each is replicated  
to near perfection  
appearing  
(as they do)  
without the bothersome foibles  
of mere humans  
they don't suffer from menstrual cycles  
or cancers  
their bodies are golden and sublime  
seamless as the glass of the screen  
they blend one to another  
until  
all have forgotten  
why they came  
and why they must leave...  
but that is the price of admission to this world  
a quiet amnesia  
that surrounds you like a gentle rain  
that arrives without warning of witness  
you stand without fear  
there is no cause for remorse now  
you consume each droplet in quiet satisfaction  
grateful to be delivered from the desert  
for after all  
it has been  
a very long trip.

Steve Parks

A Trip To Jersey

On a mental health day,  
we took the beltway  
the belt parkway  
six dollars at the bridge  
concentrated ugliness at the boarder  
cheap hotels for truckers  
superstores with reduced taxes  
due to state line quirks  
then exit and oasis  
limpid pool waters  
with shimmering pool floor design  
and abundant white wine  
I took to surfing  
running off the diving board  
my momentum carrying me a little  
on the board waiting  
not really surfing  
then someone said,  
I have never seen him like this  
Soon enough we were in transit  
our bellies stuffed with 3 different meats  
and 3 different desserts  
good old mom cookings  
and I knew I was home when  
I saw a woman with bright blue hair  
being read her fortune by Tarot cards  
and street punks flipping the bird at tourists  
as they took photos from the double decker bus  
the punkers yelled  
get a life

Steve Parks

Frank IQ 82

Your birthday is the same as my dog

he says

I ask about his dog

He died in 1982

(it is 1995)

I ask him something else

he says he is confused

he is thinking about a counselor who is absent today

he is wearing his red shorts and a white shirt for her

he says Maris is a pine tree

he says I named it

It is my girlfriend tree

It is from Miami

It has a corn head

## The Giltweasel

### Respect

There is an airy green symbiance  
in the early morning coolness

of a canyon river syncopated  
flush-gushing in the springtime,

running the winter's last effort  
running downstream, and

the act of Love-making with a stranger on  
a vista engaged mountain top,

where the fuzz of great distance  
allows you to see forever, but

also, to orgasm with the strength  
and indifference of a melted glacier,

despite the old habitual cliché,  
allowing the release of

its eons of tension.

Jason M. Swarts

Torsion

Because--  
you arrived with  
more night than was necessary to  
cover  
the lesions on your feet and  
the deafening presence  
of bent nails and stripped screws  
that is always with us.  
my bones pulsed like a heart  
beneath my skin  
where they are bound to muscle  
too tightly wrenched;  
I clasp you in an embrace  
that remembers nothing.

26-7-95

---

Carl Boster

CHANGING FACES

changing faces,  
creating traces of dim reality.  
i choose to capture.  
sit your ass upon my knee, i need.  
ground and death rapture.  
speed and rest saps your...  
changing places  
creating mazes of perception.  
of change.

Jason M. Swarts

1/3

Pursing a chapped lip  
to accept the caress  
of your lavafingers,  
I died my death in thirds.

1/3 in an unfathomable presence  
of puckered weeds  
I fashioned a crows nest in  
the style of my girth  
which borders on being art in itself  
while remaining too distant  
to belong to me.

1/3 as Lot's wife  
crying the tears  
of dead oceans  
textured by thousands of  
skipped stones  
off the surface of  
an otherwise harmless temptation.

1/3 knowing  
that I was chosen to see  
invisible contours  
reflected backwards in my palm.  
knowing that I will someday  
invent a death  
that comes out right...

12-8-95

Jason M. Swarts

A compass finds North to my Left

My age is the sum total of all wavelengths  
that emit the color of my eyes...  
and I write in my journal of processes:  
"3rds gone but i remember them still  
in rooms decorated with the reverse sides of street signs  
buffed to a clean shine,  
reflecting the infinity of my grimace  
as i slice my palm on the decor.  
My stain matched the furniture--  
it sold for more than it was worth."  
September 1 1995 1:15 pm  
I am worth too much in terms of myself.  
I am a center of perception  
to which all things react.  
A compass finds North to my left;  
I turn and face it.

9-1-95

---

The Giltweasel

Agenda

The anger spansks as  
I lean against the car hood.  
She walks dangerously across the  
intersection.  
GOD(interjection)DAMMIT!!!  
cross-section of my beet-head:  
the ginger settling angst  
red-graciously into the  
reptile-logical center brain stem sandwich  
digesting in my bubble-blubble-red-bloody-stubbly  
mush-mind-melon-ball.

Pb Sanderson

the list

I find out I'm on  
the list  
and the taste in my mouth wants  
to be rid of me.

Even as the words,  
the confirmation,  
the words leave his lips  
my heart starts beating in a slow  
fluttering southern drawl,  
the foreign feel of my own blood  
courses through my veins with the anger  
and delirium of virgin lions  
out to the saw-dust  
floors of Rome. Rome, with its churches  
and its

(say the word  
speak; like a lion roar  
like a nightingale sing  
or like a gypsy, lie)

sin.

Someone tells me,  
concedes and confirms,  
tells me I'm on  
the list

(with the drunks and rapists  
who shuck women like corn  
and peel off their sanity like  
the skin on a grape)

and my heart

jerks back into  
that very first chamber,  
blood scrambling inside until  
I think I might implode



The words, they just come out of his mouth  
“yes, I can confirm that rumor,”  
and this is never again my home.  
I am forever the trespasser, watched  
by eyes down long noses and up  
into windows they wished were gallows  
my eyes, wanting to see anything  
besides this little death  
blink and tear at the reality,  
hoping not to release the words  
but cloud this reality  
and the upholstery under my fingertips seems to give  
and the hum of my room  
    the hum of this room is now a dirge,  
a slow steel guitar buzzing in my ears  
which are, themselves,  
still burning with the news.

Yeah, my heart’s still beating, but it knows  
that it’s thought to be cold and still.  
someone just asked me for my name  
and I kinda want to lie.

---

Steve Parks

Haiku

child leans forward to  
get under the subway turnstile  
changes lean, says, LIMBO!

## ***Author Biographical Information***

**Stephen Parks** is from Wisconsin and lives in the East Village of NYC. He teaches at a private high school. He is the editor of a newspaper written by people with disabilities.

### **Jason Michael Swarts**

I'm a reader of Celan and Rilke and a lot of my poetry comes out of an interest in cultural theory.

### **John Gurney**

I was born in Omaha and have a very strong affinity for the Midwest. For the past 15 years I have lived in California. I am a small business owner, avid boat freak, and student of writing. My earliest memory of poetry is finding a copy of Lawrence Ferlinghetti's "Comney Island of the Mind," in 5th grade at school. The only book I ever stole from a library. The book changed my life, and showed me the POWER of poetry.

**John Amato** presently lives in North Bergen, NJ. He has been teaching for twenty years, current assignment:technology information k-12;teacher in-service training in computer instruction. He has published an article in NJEA review "At Risk Students and Electronic Authorship."; and also has written computer instruction manuals for classroom use. Wrote poetry in college and this last year has been spending hours with the muse to rekindle the verse.

The Giltweasel did not receive personal information from Pb Sanderson or Carl Boster, so they are not credited here. I would like to thank all authors for their submissions, and make the request that you continue to support this magazine with fresh submissions whenever you have them available.



You may make submissions to either addresses below  
or to the Giltweasel's e-mail address as follows:  
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Any correspondence you may require should be directed to  
any of these addresses.

As always, Submissions are vital to the continuing  
publication of The Giltweasel.

Please do not be shy, all efforts are welcome.



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