

Leo Dan

"Husbandry"

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She's sixty-one years old and hiding in a school bus
Kind of objectionable
With a heart like a fist

She stood on a street in Norfolk in a pea-coat and a
headache
Watching the traffic splash by
When a four day clown in a pick-up truck drove her out
to the woods
Down a gravel lane, down a dirt road, down some dust
on the grass
To a shadow, with some bricks around it

Near a pecan tree, near a boulder, near a dog, near
invisible
He dobed his hat and scuffed his heel
And puffed real hard on his cheap cigar
And he spewed the smoke out in the air
And asked her if that was a wig on her head
Or if it was real hair

He laughed real loud and said she was cute
And then he leaned over and said "excuse me"
And put the cigar out in the dog's face
"I live here" he said
He went inside

She turned around and walked past the dog
Back up the dust on the grass, past the pecan tree
Back up the dirt road, back up the gravel lane
And back to Norfolk

Back there at his place late at night, when the owls
congregate
And the snakes sleep, when the trucks hit the spacers
in the overpass
And the storm drains cough up dust and cigarette
filters
Purge like frogs at the side of the road

Back there, down the gravel lane, down the dirt road

Down some dust on the grass, past the pecan tree to
the shadow
With some bricks around it

Back there, late at night, back there in the dark
Back there in the dust, back there
The dog burst into flame

Anyhow, time went by, anyhow snap crackers and
stone soup
Walking on cornflakes and stopping blocks
Anyhow, she went back to where the dog blew up
She tried her luck, she went back, maybe she could
paint the porch
Maybe she could fix the roof, maybe she could build a
roof

She told him "you can't smoke cigars, though, I'm too
damn frail"
And he said "I won't"
Then he lit a cigarette and dropped his hat
He said, "It's OK, I have a cat

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