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Poetry: Two Poems

Daniel Hoffman

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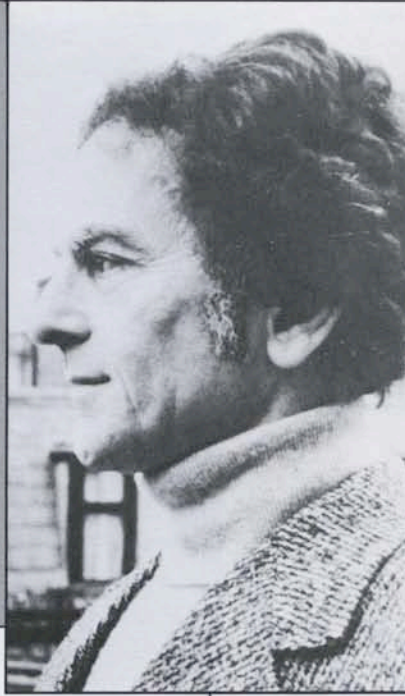
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Two Poems



Elizabeth McFarland

by
Daniel
Hoffman

LAST LYNX

A census of murdered
Chickens. Entrails and bones
Swarming with green
And blue bottle-flies,
An incriminating scene

Like hound-dogs slashed,
Bellies gashed open,
The guts dragged
Howling a little ways
Towards home—

Who'd need to see half
A footprint in soft
Earth after rain,
It was the last
Lynx in Hancock County

And they all went
Out on that hunt,
For the fun, the excitement,
Some for the bounty.
With their shot-guns and deer-guns

They blazed at anything moving.
Those damned fools near killed
Their sons, their companions.
Never got near her.
She's gone,

Leaving the legends
Of her crafty will
And the longings of hunters
As keen as the hungers
She sates with her kill.

THE SACRED FOUNT

Stubborn hidalgo, rusting in his mail,
Outliving enemies, his loves, his time.
What spell, what doom lures him to hope that Time,
Whose breath seres every limb, would leave him hale?

The stagnant swamps he's swigged! How many's the time
Since being gulled by a Medicine Man's tall tale
He's almost found that fount; but weary, frail,
An old dog can but piddle away his time.

Who hasn't hacked through mangroves, tried to suck
The juvenescent dew from the earth's breast,
Gulped potions, bottles, jugs, with just his luck

While Memory's daughter still holds out her Grail—
One taste, and a body is forever blessed,
She sings, from thickets serried as chain-mail.

*Daniel Hoffman is a distinguished poet and literary critic. He is poet-in-residence and director of the creative writing program at the University of Pennsylvania. In November 1987 he gave a poetry reading at Bridgewater. These two poems appear in **Hang-Gliding from Helicon: New and Selected Poems 1947-1987** (Louisiana State University Press), (c) 1987 by Daniel Hoffman.*