

# CutBank

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Volume 1  
Issue 1 *CutBank* 1

Article 4

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Spring 1973

## Two Poems

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### Recommended Citation

Duval, Quinton (1973) "Two Poems," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 1 , Article 4.

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## **BLACK PARROT**

Rare and mean; they do not speak  
but understand perfectly.

I wish he would come, like  
a devil's tooth, and grind  
against me. I need a listener.

It's a strange way that we meet.  
And I know about those habits  
you have been hiding.

The copper coins eaten like  
carrots to preserve the sight.

The roll of wet bills, stuck  
behind the commode.

And when you touch yourself  
in the dark parts of the night,  
that hard plastic in the beak  
softens, and perhaps a silver tear  
escapes to dampen the feathers.

So black, they are green.  
I thank you for coming. Take my  
wrists firmly and slowly we rise  
through this ceiling; leave  
the tiny red drops on the pillow.

## TONNAGE

I darken my little room.  
So quiet now—the only sound  
the air traffic above.  
Groaning in the night like  
a dreamer, a dreamer comes  
and shakes me awake.  
I am thankful. My hand  
had been caught in the keys  
of the typewriter and  
I dreamt of being bitten  
to death.

I don't know what to do.  
My weight, the weight of my body,  
leaves me. The two halves of  
my ass no longer pressing against  
the chair. There is no chair.

The cold air licks my face  
through a fistsized hole  
in the window. I see a shadow:  
a soul like a black baseball flies  
over the fence. Out of the yard.

If I go and check, I know  
it won't be there. Anyway,  
it is too cold, and too dark,  
and I am afraid I will lose myself  
and never come back.