

CutBank

Volume 1
Issue 6 *CutBank* 6

Article 7

Spring 1976

Bragging

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Recommended Citation

Griffith, David (1976) "Bragging," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 6 , Article 7.

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BRAGGING

Once I caught a weasel with my bare hands.
One summer with Danny Shelton,
who years later drowned trying to fake his death,
I put a priest's car in neutral
where it sat on Mercy College hill—
through a fence & off a tree & into a neighbor's house.
I remember we scared up an owl when
we ran. Its five-foot span seemed larger then.

In high school while the owner
of the finest hotel in town toured Europe,
we rummaged his basement for booze: thirty-two fifths
of the oldest gin I'd ever seen. Bo got sixteen.
Danny was dead by then.

Sometimes without even trying I blow a smoke ring
through another. I can warble like a bird.
Maybe that's not much, but Gary Cooper
got his first big role because he could roll a smoke
with one hand.

But often I've my own misgivings,
mornings, the same stupid face looking back,
such need as suggested by sleep,
by diversion in sex & crime.
Still, if nights when I'm inside my love
my intentions poise like dares, & here
I come so near her heart
It's best I leave this way:
withdrawing small & slowly, shyly as a child.