

CutBank

Volume 1
Issue 9 *CutBank* 9

Article 19

Fall 1977

Two Poems

Lee Bassett

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Bassett, Lee (1977) "Two Poems," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 9 , Article 19.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss9/19>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in CutBank by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

SPRUCE

What lucky chance it is
that brings you and I together
this night before you leave.
Inside the house my friends
huddle together, drinking
and laughter. Out here you
watch a tall spruce.
The cars shooting by
need to get somewhere,
the foggy moon curling around us
like a shrimp. I want to tell you
the whole story. What comes out
is fog.

Today I took a walk. Then I tore up
scraps of old letters I should have saved.
Then I walked again. Dog down the street
limps oddly from the thud with a car,
the trees that used to groan in storms
now broken into firewood. Today I
gracefully stopped running from something.
Trying to see what that feels like.

And now you will go. Always
a different town and you
always lovely. In the top
of every spruce you pass by
a man with a patch over his eye
will be sitting, watching you

as best he can. You'll wave
as you walk, always away. Past
the red dirt, the stray cat and
ditch flowers. And I will be here
in my yard, thinking of you. My cat
and I will sit and talk about
the silly world.

for Maret

GETTING MARRIED IN SMELTERVILLE

After honeymoon
we pass that sad porch one
last time. Flies swimming
in lemonade, whine of the love
swing, fists of sparrows in lilac.
Next door, a man whose wife died
lets his grass grow up to heaven.
Far off at a ballgame, foul smoke
of coal and smell of popcorn. And
the dreamy river pours its lovely
catfish out of the sac. This is our
town and we are off. Everybody
loves a runaway.

The man on the porch
doesn't wave when we wave. He
is having a dream. In the dream
he drives to work, trees leaning
against houses, pushing them over.
Every puddle in the darkness looks
like a dead cat. At work one man wears
the same hat and chews his gum. The lady
next to him, wanted in five states.
A friend with a heart attack sweeps the floor.
Someone calls the wife, "Of course I'll see
you tonight, it's routine."

Inside the dream, one night
of dream. The man jolts up.
Inside himself he hears the laugh
of drunk kids, fiddling with his Ford.
He runs out naked with a hammer. He throws
it hard at the getaway car, deep in the
reflection of himself. Standing where he
stands, the way the world is, in moonlight.
And you and I this afternoon wave again

at the man. We whistle what is lovable in
our hands, around waists and in the air.
Today as we leave, that man on the porch
is the Best Man.

for Wendy