

CutBank

Volume 1
Issue 9 *CutBank* 9

Article 33

Fall 1977

Two Poems

Mark Vinz

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Recommended Citation

Vinz, Mark (1977) "Two Poems," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 9 , Article 33.

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HOMETOWN BLUES

Everybody here is sturdy, proud —
like boulders hauled to field's edge,
or elms along the boulevards.
Not old, they seem to be,
even children — small construction crews
hugging sidewalks and backyard swings.

Habit rules, and industry. The wind
cries only when it's stopped.
You stare toward bedroom windows, always dark,
trying to imagine faded flowers on walls,
photos gathered on dresser tops,
kinds of sleep you've never known.

You've been away too long to feel more than
the silent etiquette of questions never asked.
You wouldn't want to live here,
though you know they'd take you in —
these are the ones who understand
all forms of weather, even yours.

**POET, SEEKING CREDENTIALS, PULLS DARING
DAYLIGHT ROBBERY OF SMALL TOWN
IOWA BANK**

The teller said she knew right off
he was a different type — the note
he passed her was a tulip petal
covered with some kind of “foreign script.”

But when he leaped on top of the potted plant,
threatening to throttle her with his heron
or his snake, she got the message — gave him
nearly 30 bucks in cash and some blank checks.
He bowed and autographed her wrist.

According to the late, late news reports
he’s still at large — last seen headed East
pushing an orange Packard with Venezuelan plates.