

CutBank

Volume 1
Issue 18 *CutBank 18*

Article 17

Spring 1982

from Letter to a Dead Wren

Bob Ross

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

Ross, Bob (1982) "*from* Letter to a Dead Wren," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 18 , Article 17.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss18/17>

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.

From LETTER TO A DEAD WREN

2.

Wren, I have watched
an uncle, a tough, tired farmer,
lean himself against a post after milking,
facing the delicate and marbled and blazing west,
and let a striped kitten chew his thumb;

the same man capable of coming drunk
to work not done and the light gone
and beating his thin-skinned Guernseys
to a weird confusion,
the floor of the milk-barn slick with manure,
spilled grain everywhere, a stall in splinters,
himself near blind with headache,

no one speaking—

Here is the worst thing I've done.
I had a wild dog once, a stray.
He came to love me, and I him. When I was gone

a few days, he left the place.
He didn't return when I came home.
It was winter.

Nights later, when I was sure he was dead,
a howl came from Hagan Lake.
I heard it once, clearly.

It was dark and I'm afraid of the dark.
I didn't go look for him.