

Fall 1983

P.O.W.: In the States

Robert Lietz

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

Lietz, Robert (1983) "P.O.W.: In the States," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 21 , Article 32.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss21/32>

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.

P.O.W.: IN THE STATES

This may take some coaxing,
but see it: the rows of tulips
blindfolded by late season snow,
the pines standing for a country
of lakes that mean hard winters,
meaning more than that.

I struggled up scents
of huskings. The legs of women
turned to fat

to bear the weight they carried.
Today even the dreams punish,
turn a decade up from textbooks,
pungencies men died of,
the lounge whores like sad school-girls
at a pep-rally. Afternoons

I might be manning a steamshovel
or forklift, I listen to music
I missed then. Some word catches
mood, some levity of flatpicked
steel. Clouds smear across thousands
of miles and ten years.

My blood sorts out that
tempting memorabilia. I go out
into the city,

into an afternoon of jackhammers,
of roofers tapping down
new shingles. I want what their
hands mean, building their days
toward evenings love comes home to.
Not this x-ing of purchases

off lists that blank forever
on me, these waitresses, cashiers,
their names on plastic nameplates
pinned to their breast pockets,
these eyes I explain myself to
over daiquiris and after,

that set me
along a too familiar route.