MANUSCRIPTS

dinnertime

DAN BREWER

the creativity
of the womb born from laughter and drunkeness
and leftover emotions.
an evening in a
dirty,
smoke-filled,
$6 hotel room.
wind blowing dingy yellow curtains
tapping
the hem of them against the
empty
Wine bottles
and hearing
the tinkling noise
paralleling that
with the feelings in your heart (but only
at the burst of emotion).
silence
from words that express
nothing
but a guilt-ridden complex
broken—
by a rat
crawling
after the crumbs remaining from the
Wafers.

man’s arms engulf her to
protect
woman from
rodent.
night
has crept into their
inner most
to make blacker———
whiteness erased.
fertilize
her mind
and body.
unpromise your quoted Bible verses,
your wealth,
warmth,
and comfort she was to receive.
a wasted $6 that could have been used for the
destruction of your
promise.
the season died the reason erased.
child would have been orphan birth.

MISS QUENSOME’S HERO: THE PHOENIX OF SQUALOR

BARBARA FEICK

“There are heroes in evil as well as in good.”
from *Maxims* by La Rochefoucauld

Hero is a dog, Miss Quensome’s pride and joy; Hero is also
a malevolent, hulky, and odious mutt that defiles everything he
passes with his abominable smell. He spends most of the day rolling
in dunghills of the neighbor’s horse. After he has lain there enough,
he walks in his lumpish way, bits of dung still clinging to his fur, to
bask in the sun on the bank of the local cesspool. Towards evening
this reeking cur prowls around looking for food at the various
garbage cans. Many times he has shown his decaying fangs to a
plump sewer rat that tried to steal his moldy chicken or turkey
carcass. While his head and tail are affected with acomia (his tail
being so devoid of hair that it resembles the rat’s,) his nose is
occupied by worms which makes him all the more loathsome. So
foul a beast is Hero that the existence of another creature lower
than he is unlikely.

His name is attributed to a lonely old maid who grows gladiolas
and roses for the annual flower show. She cannot afford a green-
house, so she grows them in several flower beds in her back yard.
During the growing season an old tomcat named Rick likes to eat the
buds of the gladiolas, leaving the rosebuds alone because he has not
yet figured out a way to get past the thorns. Because of Rick’s