

MANUSCRIPTS

dinnertime

DAN BREWER

the creativity
 of the womb born from laughter and drunkenness
 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 greenhouse, 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