

## PAUL BENNETT

### *A Birthday Thought, 1976*

Born in snow  
After heroic resolution,  
When coral-bells are interior,  
Their airy stems bending,  
Their petals like cheeks,  
Soft as lips,  
Is to be different from  
Those customary men and women  
Trapped in syntax  
Piling fuzzy words  
On words night and day.

Nothing means  
Except it be bitten off—  
Except its saying touch us  
In intimate places, intimate ways,  
The moisture of feeling  
Primeval as mud,  
Stones ground fine  
For our nurture,  
Osmosis: the passage of liquid  
Through a membrane,  
The substance of silence.

## DARRYL PRICE

### *What Happens Now*

The grass has  
Turned into a fire  
Blazing over her feet,

Until she is the center of the sun,  
Like the flame around the wick  
On a candle. She goes anyway. I sicken

And die, a petal ripped beneath  
An evil rain's mad paws. I am shredded,  
Like colored balloons going up now.