

RICHARD DINGES

Pane

Square clear panes
smudged by stories
told in sign language
misted in echo
to life's breath
a dam between
me and the rest
of the world
a false hope
that I am protected
from weather and terror
from birds lost
in ancient migrations
that once crossed
my desk where I stare
out at a horizon
I will never touch.

Itch

With no hair shirts,
we have chiggers
that even nudity
cannot escape
that constant urge
to scratch what itches
below our belts,
a primeval burn
no books describe
or absolve or douse,
well into night's
deepest darkness
under a new moon
and all we want
is to scratch which
only intensifies
the eternal itch.

Full

Birds escape south,
leaves erased from trees,
summer sunk into
pale dust, fall's last
dry breaths whispered
and unheard. Sky
slowly fades to gray.
Horizon bleeds into
stars and moon rises
a brilliant grinning
effigy that we all
gaze upon, light
enough to see each
other's dark eyes,
white bared teeth,
and slow transcendence
into lunacy.

Richard Dinges has an MA in literary studies from University of Iowa and manages business systems at an insurance company. *Green Hills Literary Lantern*, *MacGuffin*, *Rio Grande Review*, *Writer's Bloc*, and *Illya's Honey* most recently accepted his poems for their publications.