

MICHAEL MEINHOFF

Teddy Bear

The smoothed surface of the pint-sized,
granite stone
reads:

RONNIE LEWIS
1948 ----- 1953

The head and right ear
of a soft (I touched him), water-drenched,
toy bear
rests
against the lower, right side
of the stone.

The bear's eyes are wide open,
and his right, hind leg sticks straight up
in the air.
The bear appears to have just fallen
and died

... not so very long ago.

Down Time

The sun is weak today --
it's been staying out too long
somewhere else.

Not even the sun can shine
brightly all the time,
everywhere.

We all need a quiet place
below the horizon.

Odd, though, how poets
and mystics shine

brighter during
downtime

than when fully
exposed.

Cities under Siege

Traffic noise and air pollution
climb your high-rise walls
like warriors on a secret mission,
like the interest on unpaid bills.

They stare in your windows
like sneaky paparazzi ... like ghosts,
like the eyes you don't have
in the back of your head.

They know
you've got to open up sometime.

Coastal Route

A launching pad for birds

A runway for those whose thoughts fly seaward
whose sunset dips its warm body into the sea
whose vision touches the endless horizon

A place for those who have always loved to swim
for those whose mind lifts up and down,
and up again and then curves over
in lullaby-like undulations

A destination for those who never wanted to leave
their mother

My Mother's Breathing

Lungs full of an angry ocean,
a sea reaching its fingers out for thinned air

and my mother's shore taking a pounding,
a forced and heavy racing in
and raging out

and throughout this last storm, my mother
stoic as a star.

Michael Meinhoff lives with his wife on twenty-five acres near Yosemite National Park where he enjoys the solitude and closeness to the land. His poetry has appeared in the *Aurorean*, *Brevities*, *Lilliput Review*, *Plainsongs*, *Song of the San Joaquin*, and *the Unrorean*.