

DANNY EARL SIMMONS

Independence Day

It was all girl-power
and hauling furniture
from Dependence to Liberation,

right up until the sky began sprinkling
and all three of them hit the mirror
asking, "Is my hair starting to frizz?"

No One's Going to Freeze to Death Inside This Man's Cave

After an hour or so of crumpling newspaper,
teepeeing kindling with plumb-bob precision,
and gently breathing coals into a near-sensual
glow, the house turns hot as a Norwegian sauna.

Forced to open every door and window wide
to the frostbitten world beyond our threshold
just so we can inhale again, we eventually find
relief from the curative effects of a moist-heat sweat.

My country-born wife can keep the woodstove
mellow and lightly-stoked all week long until fire
reverts to its natural owner (man) on Saturday.
Truth be told, I suspect it was actually a woman

who discovered how to make fire (on purpose).
Probably trying to figure out how to do something
different with leftover mammoth. I don't know.
Here's what I do know: it's 25 outside, 92 inside.

And, although I've knelt before my wife and begged
her sweet indulgence for this ridiculous swelter,
secretly I am beating my fists against my hairy chest,
grunting at the gods after my rising up to conquer cold.

Fear

kissed her whiskey-wet
along the tingling bend
of her neck, wrapped

around her narrow waist
as she arched her back
against her better judgment,
slipped inside her shirt, felt
her nipples confess to wanting
his whiskey mouth and chaser tongue
to take the long way around
the tasting of her trembling body.

Danny Earl Simmons is an Oregonian and a proud graduate of Corvallis High School. He is a friend of the Linn-Benton Community College Poetry Club and an active member of Albany Civic Theater. His poems have appeared in a variety of journals such as *The Pedestal Magazine*, *Naugatuck River Review*, *Off the Coast*, *IthacaLit*, and *Fifth Wednesday Journal*.

