

## Three Poems by Victor Henry

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### A Delicate Balance

A man and woman, arms braced against each other in a delicate balance, pivot between prurience and perversion. Naked, they hover together weightlessly like a band of outcast astronauts. They probe their past and present like binary planets in an abandoned solar system searching for their rebirth. Beyond the boundaries of their short history of decay, what is their legacy? An abridged version of alpha and omega? A smudged scuff on the cosmic carpet? In The City no one is spared. Everyone pays a premium for the cost of admission to life topside, while life underground is a bleak barbecue. Floating and nudity are forbidden. All animals are prenamed. All street sweepers are named Adam. No first-born female children are named Eve. Apples are unmentionable. The universe has been declared sterile. And man, the species, has become extinct. Like sex and art synthesized, the pair remain intertwined eternally...tied to the comet's tail.

## **Local Board No. 32**

### **During the Vietnam War two thirds who went enlisted**

For years now I've longed for  
The executive secretary, the principle clerk,  
To understand that her decisions were the reasons why twelve men  
From my hometown died in Viet Nam.

That Congress had not formally declared war,  
That there was no clear and present danger,  
That there was no need to impose a draft  
That I need her to explain to me  
Why I was drafted when others were not.

That her signature on my induction notice  
Was like a death warrant.  
Old matriarch and executioner,  
You could have been anybody's mother or grandmother,  
And I wondered then, as I do now,

How many of your sons and grandsons got drafted.  
How many died in the red dirt and monsoon mud of Viet Nam.

## **Fantasizing About Cate Blanchett**

It's the synapses,  
The impulses, the leaps, the junctions  
In between thoughts and words  
That interests me.  
Not the text already written in your mind  
I tell my friend.

Then, like a seer, I seek to stretch the truth.  
I tell it slightly slant like Emily Dickinson.  
I confess to my friend on some nights  
I lay awake  
With both hands  
Caressing my genitals until I fall asleep.

Warding off the cold air of winter  
Beneath the sheets,  
Rolled up tightly into the fetal position.  
Too cold to think of anything else,  
I fantasize about Cate Blanchett.  
We kiss and kiss again. Our tongues skim

the soft fleshy part of the inside of our lips.  
Our tongues slide along the ridge of our teeth,  
Probing, sensing pleasure, succumbing.  
I give in, feel her warmth,  
Explode, erupt in contentment,  
Desiring her as much as my mind does.

**Victor Henry's** work has appeared in various small press magazines, anthologies, and Ezines. He holds two earned master's degrees, enjoys working as a reference librarian, is a Vietnam veteran, and a member of Veterans for Peace.