

FRONT PORCH

Ron Klassnik

from *Poems in the Shape of a Storm*

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I've got six turtles. I've also got six Love Birds, 2 green, 2 blue and 2 multicolored. A hawk swoops down and attacks them. They're all ok, but, understandably, damned shook up. Last night I dreamed two were dead. I took their heads and necks into my mouth and breathed gently.

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And, so, we stood before him at last, our ribs shining through like painted blood, and he shook his cage, there in the center of the universe, howling, till we gave him a cigarette and he leaned back, his eyes a newborn child's. It isn't hard to kill. The beauty of a dove trapped in a circle filled with smoke.

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In the bank my wife tells me she dreamed she was in jail because the neighbors don't like the way she walks— and they're shaving all the women's heads she says and it reminds me of Auschwitz she says: all that hair! I am thinking how green Auschwitz is. Even as my wife tells me they're shaving her now and she is screaming I am thinking how green it is.

Ron Klassnik grew up with cows and sheep and rabbits on weekends. Swam in muddy water. Raced farmers through wheat fields. His poems have appeared in numerous journals and his first book, *Holy Land*, will be available from Black Ocean Press in early 2008.

"I suddenly muttered 'Bloody Delilah.' We were on the porch with ice-cold Coca Colas. Mrs. (or Mevrouw to be exact) Krause made me explain and I told her I was upset about what Delilah had done to Samson. You could see far from that porch and Mevrouw Krause told me I'd grow up and have a black beard even though I was a very blonde little boy. I am sad to report that the straggly half beard my wife can't stand is mostly red."