A few moments before learning of her son's death

sitting on the porch my grandmother in the rocking chair my mother and her sisters on the steps the darkness comes and it is thick and August

they watch the moon rise huge and yellow above the fields and grandma says, oh my look at that sad picture in the moon it looks just like a lady with her girls and they're all together crying oh, that's a sad picture

John Brehm

Snow falling

this cold has burst the stars and snow falls and falls

it is good to stand here in the snow, my breath rising

the snow falling through the broken vein-work

in this fashion, held and holding the cold

of black trees frozen

John Brehm

Paternal silhouettes

and falling snow

when I feel an indian summer wind, yet see the black naked tree out my window, I shudder at winter's approachat those golden wafers layered below that soon like popcorn seeds will burst white to cool and hide a warm fired earthat that squirrel recovering a lost nut in the shadows of leaves Oh the winter comes fast here and slick, never departs until may-now, any comfort on a warm breeze does not account for the deathly beyond-even in spring, winter never quite withdraws its ephemeral tease to green buds and with its frosty tongue chides the naive—oh the constant regret of those warm days, the insincere thought of spring and winter winter seeping into the slow air like an ominous vapor fills a complete space

Patricia Autremai



Untitled

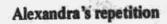
Never so sweet has life been on earth as the world we knew before our birth.

A time not our own, no sense of fear; like a story in the clouds that God is near.

Once its life has begun its spirit is clear. Be it happy, not sad; Laughter, not tears.

Should God hear this sigh from man's heart, woman's womb; "Please give life to this child we let die."

Michael Haley



i spent a year watching al sit facing the wall everynight raking her scalp with her hands.

her yawn squinting face used to drag straw-sandaled feet to the bar everynight. she's rude to the barmaid and cries in her beer 'til the guy on her left hovers, brushing her hair and tears with his hands; their Alsatian eyes begin to get drunk—
drunk with longing for
someone to take home.

home again everynight she savors each note on the record, she alone after bottles of beer, swaggering harpsicord lulls her upstairs where she trips over shoes in the hall.

the next day redfaced requests I walk much softer and my voice be turned to a whisper. . . not moving not speaking with her face to the wall alexandra shaking.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Writers who would like to submit fic-tion or poetry for publication in Fathom are invited to bring their work to the Daily Nebraskan office, Room 34, Nebraska Union. The deadline for the next issue is March.

