

Daily Bread

by John Riley

When I was a lovely boy
trapped for months in prison
paying back the state
for selling a bag of dope
criminally under-weight
I woke before dawn
to go to the mess hall
and make the breakfast bread.
Operating the mixer
churning flour and water
and the stinking yeast
into biscuit dough
I'd watch the blade lope
and wonder if I'd like
to become another thing
made from new ingredients
so that none of what I was
would talk to me again.
But I was a bright kid
although overly restrained
and knew total eradication
is impossible, that time
will never rise,
that the problem with youth
is that the world is round.

