

Raleigh

by Bill Yarrow

He shot off his big toe with a shotgun
and afterwards could never stand up straight.
His bodily balance was gone. Six months later
his judgment went. He worked for my dad
one summer. "Good looking kid," said my mom.
That was in June. By August, he looked bombed
out. Slough troughs disfigured his face. Deep
craters of indifference had reshaped his body.
His smoky mien was goofy. By then he had quit
working at the arcade. When I saw him by the
taffy stand, still the handsome center of attention,
his feral eyes and blatant hair opposed me. My dad
always had a fondness for Raleigh's kind of loss:
the bright shell of confidence betrayed by arrogant risk.

