

Thoughts While Hovering Over an Ironing Board - OR - STEAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

by Carl Santoro

Pushing the "surge of steam" button has lately
given me a feeling of
power;

I push a button and
a loud gurgling sound
dampens the spirit
of even a 100% cotton item,
and forces it to
be still and
straighten out.
I need a button like
this to affect family and friends.

The phone rings.
A time-bandit wants me.
If I answer, the ironing must wait.
Funny how the ringing today
sounds like the phone
in the office
of my last job.

"Where's the damn fax, Carly?"

"I handed it to you
on the way into your
meeting, George."

"But it's not with any
of my papers.
Are you sure it was the...,"
he pauses to recollect
the all-important
ad agency in his
web-filled mind,
"...the, Ackerstone one with
the shooting schedule and
layout all in one?"

"Yes, remember you laughed
at the way they portrayed
Douglas with the dimple
looking like a black hole?"

"What? No...Yes! Well
where in the hell is it now?
Did I bring it into the meeting?"

"I'll get it...
no one else cares
around here."

It was the screeching, yet
calming voice of one of
my own tribe
reassuring me the phone
would be answered.

I looked down at my daughters

blouse and wondered
if I was responsible
for what seemed to be
a new brown stain
near the throat.

Oh, the fax. He left it
on the Xerox machine
with the 15 copies he was to hand out.

I wonder if Kevin
is out already?

"Anyone, " I yelled
down the stairs, "know
if Daddy left yet?"

School mornings always have
an overwhelming urgency
and crisis about them;
sprinkled with startling
discoveries from
the night before.

"No," was the
stereophonic reply from
the two bathrooms.

"But the car is gone,"
Bridget observed, "and
his briefcase and lunch
are
on
the
kitchen table."

"He'll be back," I thought
partly distracted now
by joy criticizing
the ex-mayor for
being funny but
not
having
a
sense
of
humor.

This talk radio has me
focusing in
too often
on the present moment
in a Manhattan studio
and forgetting my life
here
on
Long
Island.

"Daddy just pulled into
the driveway!" Jeanette declared.

