

Something Strange There Is

by Jerry Ratch

Maybe God couldn't find His bifocals, and that's why my check for ten million hasn't shown up yet. Maybe a stray dog in heaven ate my check. Maybe God went bankrupt like everyone else. Okay, so maybe at the end of life I'll balance my checkbook.

I do remember having a beer once, and feeling like a minor god. I felt like I could have written *myself* a check then.

I really think we should have been drinking Wild Virgin, not this Wild Turkey stuff. Time to move on from this goofy horn-blowing, monkey-voice chattering nonsense.

What was it that saturated the air between us as almost nothing else? Beyond all forms, beyond believing. No tongue has soiled it, and no word has ever reached it. What saturated the air between us, honey lover? Can you tell me?

A soft rain kept falling outdoors in the night. I lay in bed awake while animals mated in the tree limbs outside my windows. Or they were being eaten.

The dog was very excited. She ran around the house snorting, her nose twitching in the dark air. In the distance the palm trees stirring in the light wind.

Do you remember telling me once, "My tits exist for the sole purpose of being sucked by you?"

The evening ends, yes. But you, of course, were virgin, pure, and held out a little at the end. Your quiet beauty may be what carries you now, but the sky's on fire with existence. I know what it was that stood between us. I'll bet in some lie you told, your life began making sense. And it was I who was left out in the cold and the dark, and the absolute, chilling, senseless wind.

