

# Dumb Ass

*by* John Riley

I want to tell you how the odor of the flowers  
felt her funeral day, not just what they smelled of,  
and, if I could do so, I would also tell you  
when the pipes froze each winter  
beneath the old farmhouse that sat on stones  
she'd say—every year—that it is undeniable  
shitting must be done so henceforth,  
her word, it will be done in the outhouse  
that leaned at least ten degrees to the right,  
and you'd see me, and maybe even lean toward me,  
sitting there on the cold and splintery wood,  
and hear me thinking this is the entire world  
not only for my life but for yours too,  
sitting in a soon to topple wooden box  
with a well of shit beneath our exposed asses,  
and all of us, not only our asses,  
will soon become shit and you may suspect  
I never told her these or any of my thoughts  
to avoid hearing her say of course  
of course who doesn't know that,  
you are the worst type of dumb ass,  
the dumb ass who thinks he's smart.

