

# dinner for one

*by* John Wentworth Chapin

you scared the shit out of me, knocking  
on my back door like that while i washed dishes  
at the sink in my ratty camo boxers  
and sipped discount boxed chablis,  
looking out the window at the black december night  
which falls so early  
that i undress for bed before i make dinner for one.

no one else comes in my back door but you,  
so when i didn't bother with clothes or modesty,  
i saw your eyes narrow and wonder if anyone else  
comes in my back door  
since i tossed you out the front one.

because i would rather be miserable  
even in my threadbare underwear  
than cause conflict,  
i let you in and you stood with december behind you  
and me in front.

your eyes drank in the wine and the boxers and the exhaustion  
and knew it was more than politeness.

i guess you were watching me through the window  
down the shitty wine and pour a second glass  
and adjust my balls and stroke them  
while i wished for clarity.

while you fucked me bent over the kitchen counter  
for the last time,  
my only regret was the chablis standing between me  
and remembrance  
of whether i was crying while i looked out at the night.