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## Love Fire Department; Endodentristy

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Gordon T. Osing  
*Love Fire Department*

--Love Township, south Highway 51,  
Desoto County, Mississippi

1.

They leap from their desks and counters  
all over the County, to join the red engine  
at the scene of the fire; it is Love in flames  
they seek. Bug, or act of God, or carelessness,  
no matter; they unreel their lines to it  
all the same. They read her machinations  
and mystery, her progress from the source,  
right to the moment she was out of control.

Do they cause what they fear and adore?  
Did you ever do time on both sides of a passion  
at the same time? it doesn't pay not to believe  
in arsen; the norm goes up in smoke all the time.  
Do we desire to be only souls? Flames!  
do we long to sublime the body? Ashes!  
And do not the arguments for the purification  
of either dance over the same mystical coals?

Who has never followed the siren song  
to at least watch, maybe somebody on a ledge.  
Remember how you hated the false alarm?  
Wondered what was so flammable in a stone  
cathedral? Learned early fire and love  
bring you quick as anything beyond pain?  
Burned inwardly for the one weeping quietly  
in a fireman's blanket, mouth tasting of ruin?

I saw a Buddhist monk burn-up once, over  
a Nothing he didn't want, no doubt, on TV.  
He raised his hand as if in polite argument  
when the flames enfolded his head, as if  
he'd seen desire is the only world worth  
denying. (The ecstasy of his idea welcomed him.)  
Or the mind raised its arm to point the way  
beyond the sheer Nirvana for which the world burns.

On the far side of a truly mystical denial  
he, too, couldn't help getting it up for a fire,  
and driving past the Love Fire Department, south  
Highway 51, Desoto County, Mississippi,  
in a wintered land on a sunless day in the late  
20th Century, love kindles in the mind and calls-  
out all drilled volunteers, saying: Desire!  
Fancied as much as feared: the house burns either way.

2.

As to a child, the trees and fields outside blur  
to jumping telephone lines of measured melody,  
wherein voices are mingled. Has one also been desired?  
Those voices are mixed in us; we cannot finish  
answering them. Maybe the soul is translucent  
as the full moon in daylight and like the moon  
never quite begins all over again; my finish, reflecting,  
must be believing in burning out of control.  
These are roads the great Blues-men drove,  
who juked the darkness to surrender  
barely a lifetime ago, and even now  
the Delta fields are shaped to score  
their voices rising and falling in the evening  
lights, horns shining and strings taut to suffer gladly,  
who still draw the eye down into night-filled rows.

GR

Gordon T. Osing  
*Endodentristy*

From three years in China I sit, my mouth rigged  
like a public utility, munching on my own mind  
if not the unspeakable, knowing this mechanical while  
(listening to the officer banter) few utterances mean  
what is said also in the touted real outer world.

Meanwhile I'm staring into less than indifferent b-b's  
in a stranger's eyes as he hollows a poisoned tooth,  
mine, looking at nothing else.

Pity the poor mastadons, I say,  
for History's sake, whose tiny brains ravaged  
ferns, who fell in their turn in the freezing gap between  
what was going down and being unable to feel it.  
Also in the Abyss people fell Magritte-wise, in wisdom,  
talking in tanouter office, about a variety of methods of payment,  
but how not quite luscious a luxury is the skull's indifference.