

August's Winner

*Bewitched*  
The Séance (black and white)

By Michele Pizarro Harman

Gladys believes she has the gift. At the séance,  
given aide, in the black, sibyl wrap and glittering  
glass for jewels, she turns Abner into a tiny pyramid  
of fine dust. Special as volcanic ash. She grieves.  
She cannot stop the rain erasing her features.  
She grieves that she cannot the stop the rain erasing  
her features. She is water. She is a walking pillar  
of salt. If the twain met, she'd win. Dissolution.  
Witness-voyeur, voyeur-witness. *Peeping Kate*. Later,  
though he never conceded her power for a split second, her power  
for splitting seconds, he will rise from dust only  
if her tearful supplications to air are greeted with assent  
in a heaven. Or in some glistening, pre-color hell.

*Michele Pizarro Harman lives in Lancaster, California*

August Honorable Mention

Crossroads

By Ruth Hill

The vultures don't come 'til the end  
when your small town motels  
    with moldy baseboards  
are replaced with 3-story marble mausoleums  
where strangers sin and look down on you

The vultures don't come 'til the end  
when your corner stores  
are replaced with 10,000 sq. ft. warehouses

with everything-but-what-you-want  
where it takes an hour to find a tissue  
for your runny nose  
where aisle extensions block your cart,  
and snag your toes

The vultures don't come 'til the end  
when derelict properties  
are replaced with real estate agents  
pounding on your door  
Maybe someone has discovered  
what this barren land is for

The vultures don't come 'til the end  
when some local forgets  
and runs the new red light  
at the empty crossroads  
The only reason this town exists  
is that it's too far from the last small town  
to keep traveling

The vultures don't come 'til the end  
your peace and quiet ruined  
by someone with a shotgun  
who was b-o-r-e-d t-o d-e-a-t-h

*Ruth Hill lives in Chetwynd, British Columbia*