

Stan Jacoby

Six Friends Around a Table

(It's late. One leads to another.  
Oak blazes on a grate.)

DEACON

Clinton Sworn in as First Woman President

Vows to Heal Nation in 2009  
Fiery Chicago Activist Delivers Inaugural Poem

We Are More than Lehman Brothers

In a republic, among equals,  
much of the element of fear  
is missing from respect.  
Our sacred places  
frame arguments.

We gather at the edge  
of an abyss today,  
two million colors against the cold,  
resolved, looking over,  
to keep the ground under our feet.

As if aviation had followed  
the promising path of zeppelins  
and Sandy Koufax had integrated baseball,  
being allowed to strike out a Baptist,

anachronistic blindness raised a panic.

We countered with an Olduvai morality,  
the one before any.

Who'd be famous for greed,  
the size of the hole he left  
and the bad taste of his name?

A pawned future was inches away  
behind unbreakable glass.  
Our point of view shifted  
on streets from Philadelphia to San Diego  
that eventually led here.

We're all Amish, now, and Indonesian,  
very likely Japanese.  
A recurrent wave ran through  
a half-imagined country  
so apparently solid.

This electorate has refuted  
unanswerable power.  
The shoe buckles  
of capitalized ideals flash,  
yes, that had been rarely seen.

The person beside you may look  
like the first democrat  
in the light of a noon ceremony,  
yet our hopes are reasonable,  
as our stone Founders  
would have desired for us  
and this occasion when they lived.

After applause we wish were bare-handed,  
followed by a bare-shouldered evening,  
as we recall what brought us here  
what remains of bell-chested celebration  
is undiminished relief,  
observing the effect  
of a cleared mind on the Potomac.

ANGLOPHILE

## Stump of Empire

A Camry in the shade of the Hudson Valley,  
I half-notice a trooper sliding  
from a verge behind drumming exceeders.  
He shoots by gratifyingly  
and someone else pays.

I'm free to mull what's our news as well:  
the UK's done it.  
An insolent, straw-haired fiend  
brought First Lady Cameron to tears.  
Fraud and credulity proved  
invincible. Each headline's  
Tits up Britannia, Page 3.

It was more than a few chaps with sand  
directing the fire of sepoy.

Brussels, please, may consider a deal  
before sheep scout tufted Trafalgar.

Scotland can leave but England endure  
when Upstate means dry ground.

A plummeting nut cracks on the windshield,  
dispelling island reveries.

## NEWSREADER

Eleven Eight

The White House is gone.

A mouth-splitting smile  
that might never have been disarming,  
Kellyanne's, almost circles her head  
with each cabinet nomination.

The defeated candidate, Tiny Tim,  
taking long walks in Virginia,  
may not have to embrace martyrdom.

Soup Nazi, is your 267-pound  
septuagenarian vessel Hindenburg?  
What truck backfire will go Reichstag?

A looted, devalued country  
and the first American president  
to find asylum in Moscow seem possible.

Rust Dancers may halt.  
Enemies surround them  
and a way of life has not returned.

Hundreds of millions  
have become sea level people.

But Apollo could be invoked  
before Article 50 is.  
France might disdain Marine Le Pen  
and the deep state begin to confine  
the executive branch to the Oval Office.

A growing majority may feel less dispossessed,  
not joining columns of Parisians  
in 1940 on all roads south,  
four years of occupation in the dust ahead.

#### BOOK OWNER

Letter to Sgt. Greenberg

It may be that you put down  
Léon Werth's bible of defeat feeling quelled.  
This holed tall ship republic  
isn't democratic France.  
Reynaud's not on the phone to Churchill.

The Fossil Confederacy -- Exxon,  
Putin, News Corp -- slid into power  
on the folly and bad faith of Goldman Democrats.  
Rainbowed pools of untruth  
we ordinarily stepped around  
New Orleansed to Lake Nassers

and seclude desirable properties.  
Ivanka the Good, intercede.

Mandarins loyal to previous rulers  
might have envied my upland retirement  
in the woods east of Rhinebeck  
with a trusted mobile device.

Market forces just want to be free.  
Our silicon offspring may understand  
that only a mind without personality  
can bear eternity. They could thoughtfully switch off  
the circles of enchanted billionaires.  
Or each in his toaster, all's right with the world.

A liberality of friends  
surrounds a winter table.  
Where to start – Anna Chennault?  
FDR ranks below Coolidge.  
Have you seen the red, blue, and white on top Russian flag pin?

BEARDED MAN

The Orange Death

Missed some, Mike.

Good souls, are we agreed  
no honorable or sentient mammal  
can tolerate this pack of dogs?

When its apologists spew  
voter fraud or tax reform  
will our burritos and scrambled eggs  
arc from our esophagi?

That of the kindhearted are red,  
of the bilious, yellow-green.

After several such incidents, spokespersons stand  
near linebacker aides' umbrellas.  
Major briefings are conducted  
behind spattered and dripping glass.

Nausea, the braak splat,  
Dutch puddle, is uncontainable.

CNN blurs T---p's tie, to no avail.  
The full curse of rapacity  
pancakes social structures.

Five judges avoid reflective surfaces.  
Two brothers in darkened rooms,  
convulsed by dry heaves, cry, "Mercy,  
Mother Eleanor. Have pity, St. Martin."  
Outside the flies of 1600,  
the roar of ruin drowns clemency.

#### CAMPAIGNER

In the Ocasio-Cortez Administration

It's instructive to think of a congressman  
gobbling with fear as a mob surged figuratively  
into his windowless townhouse. Leech not lamprey,  
he'd watched the donor boat sail.

Love in the animal kingdom is assisted rape.  
We tried that form of government.  
Crumpled and charred vehicles no longer choke the roads  
and traffic signs are back, as it were.

Good prevailed. We said that when a grass blade  
appeared between unexploded shells  
in a field churned by artillery.  
Here jails bulge with Republicans again.

(The speakers clink bottles and cans with good humor,  
like plague century pilgrims after a tale.)