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The Holy Land

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Cover Page Footnote

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*The Soul of Man

The sun rises
To pry open our eyes
After a long surrender
To night's slumber.
The morning frost
Encases the earth
In the cold grasp
Of winter, in early March.
The warm rays of the sun
Penetrate the room,
Through the window,
Ready to perform
The daily coitus
Between man and nature.
But man is not a nature-lover;
He sits back

In his towering cathedrals of stone,
Mortar,
Concrete,
And steel,
Perpetually contraceptive
To the embrace
Of the sun and the breeze,
The ocean and the trees,
Never wanting to walk
Barefoot on the sand.
As his work-ritual ends,
He drives-away on the highway,
Racing towards the west,
Running away from where he has
been.

*Edited from complete poem

Roger Scalzo

The Holy Land

Do you understand everything that has been said to you?,
Says my Father.
He is new to me as Prometheus' red flower was to my brothers.
My Father has always been away at the city
Resting behind pillars, looking down at the hills and the slow river.
Near my ritual time he sent me postcards
Inviting me to climb the hills and wade the river and fly
But this was not his hill or his river.
The places were far away, foggy with dreams.
He has come home to me from the dark in brilliant light
With shiny bracelets and fine stitched robes.
His face is queer and angry but he knows me —
He calls me son.
I don't remember him the same
His face soft and moving back and forth in the fire light.
He said he wanted my portrait and wash my hands in fine black balm.
He did not want to forget me.
He gave me his bracelets and then I knew
I knew I was not a boy but a man.
A bigger man than my father
Because his bracelets pinched.

Peter J. Duffy