

Richard Benneman

Sheltering

If the autumn leaves are lonely,
fallen from the trees,
then they must find comfort
sleeping under winter snows.

If an old man's heart becomes lonely
surely his memory must return
to the children that he
had left shelterless behind.

Autumn leaves, old men, the past
forgotten, dream in their cold dotage
of sheltering, and the snow that comes
to cover their gaunt, lonely memories.

Re-Living

Searching for eternal life,
royal mummies sleep beneath the sand,
companied only by the bat and rat,
waiting for the magic of Osiris
to touch them to life again.

Recorded on videotape or photographs,
we too, shall return to life
when tomorrow comes, waiting
for the magic of a button
to enliven frozen faces from the past.

The Pharaohs' search was no less
than ours, their sleep
burdened with the dust of years
in hidden tombs or pyramids,
and we shall rest reel upon reel
in computer memories, plastic tapes.

Our instant-eye magic is, to us, simpler,
but no less a mystery,
than all the hieroglyphic curses
in the Egyptian Book of the Dead.

Whether mummied shells of former glory,
in gold encased, or shadows reflected on a screen,
both seem bodiless, unreal,
both lie in eternal sarcophagi.

Richard E. Brenneman has recently returned to writing poetry after a long hiatus. He has been published locally in *The Wilderness House Poetry Review*, *Ibbetson Street Review*, *Nixes Mate Review* and *The Muddy River Poetry Review*. His work will be included in a forthcoming anthology *No More Will Fit Into The Evening* published by Four Windows Press. He is currently working on possible book and chapbook projects.