



Dispatches From **Lansing**

Written by Tim Lane

No.01.1

Poem

There are times when the books & art & music
are no good, when your relationships with friends & acquaintances are
no good, when the biographies of chess players are no
good, when drinks & walks are no good.

I go down into the basement
& paint. I run to the post office for a three-cent
stamp balance the checkbook shave
take notes.

You reach a certain point after a certain point when the small purchases,
the postcard, the new CD, the six-pack of Bud
are no good,
so you don't.

You stay with it.

You spend more time with
that
person you
love.



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No.01.2

Poem Begun in April

For Sheila

Damn, how I miss glass bottles, & eight-packs of Coke! When the sky's gray, your eyes are gray . . . but when your eyes are green, the sky's green, like that little chewy patty in a pack of Chuckles or an unripe banana peel, & I'm comforted by my need for you, this spring more like Minimalism or Conceptualism than Neo-Pluralism. Was it asinine to look for work when you begged me to write, collecting the clinging lint of my forefathers' balled up pride like so many cotton handkerchiefs, the kind nobody carries anymore? Maybe there's the last-ditch possibility of a poem in all of this stone-washed pollen, that yellow truck, this Baby Ruth! O, winter, I thought you were good for me because you are inconvenient, as trees are beautiful in May for missing them, in October for letting them go. But inconvenience doesn't boost character, unless one enjoys feeling pissy all the time, just as sadness only scrapes out a place for stashing the ache. I stare through the window at the distressed buds in an attempt to avoid clichés & I'm no longer yakking about art like I was in December, or maybe I am, & I have neither the ability to acquiesce nor the good sense to accept the things this crappy spring won't change.



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No.01.3

Poem Not Entirely Lacking Grace

For Lesyle

Some nights are incomplete
Without spray-painting profanities
On the neighbor's garage,
The lucky buds & blossoms of
A lackluster spring tinted
By streetlights, toned by dull
Haze, the unfortunate
Petals crushed underfoot

it seems a waste

That orange factory lights
Spoil what could be darkness

it seems a waste

The stubborn students at the cafes
Brave, but cold

it seems a waste

& Mike, with a new place
To paint, but nowhere to live;
& Lesyle, stunning in her
Brand-new Sebring, the epitome of
confidence & grace.