

1946

## Amelia, 1904-

Carol Hall

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## III

Once more we watched the proud swan circumscribe  
 Its solitary ambit round the lake;  
 And heard the prowling winds descant on man  
 And his sad genesis. "Begat in sin

And doomed . . . and doomed . . . and doomed . . ." The words recurred,  
 Reverberated through brain and blood. Then  
 My tree muttered—"Not only man . . ." Lakeward  
 We looked again. And the lonely swan-swam.

## IV

Lush and mammiform that island rose brash  
 As the germinal word tongue-warm on that  
 Glad lake.

Our thoughts coupling in green transit  
 Found perilous conjunction on rathe waves;  
 While under-arching all the sky, inverse  
 And subterranean, girdled with sly  
 Aulic lechery our laughing isle.

But

We—more sure of our meridian—passed  
 By that bright illusion . . . passed straight to our  
 Green island—our brashly-burgeoning *Now*.

DEANE MOWRER

## AMELIA, 1904—

Daughter of a comfortable insurance executive  
 In a medium midwestern city, she always felt  
 At her back the cold breath of poverty.

Conway claimed her at the membership dance  
 (Checking coats, slowly achieving college).  
 He had her only three times, because her mother

Preferred a plastic clerk whom she did not,  
Eventually, marry. She was fond of Proust,  
And wrote in a small still hand like copper plate.

He married. Fifteen years later she suffered  
A superfluous change of life which wandered  
Now to her thigh, now her contracting bosom.

CAROL HALL

TWO POEMS

VOICE OF ODYSSEUS

The empty hides walk ghostly here,  
The flesh bellows within the flesh;  
The mind tauter than a leash  
Strains from the gods, pulls back in fear.

Stirring the sacred sin of dust  
Like cattle in corrals of sun  
We brand upon the self a tone  
That burns upon the hip of lust.

The churches mad within the head  
Swear vengeance for the sacred cow;  
We fear the sun will leave us now  
And go to shine among the dead.

PAN

I met him in the month of May  
When I was sweet sixteen;  
I looked into his heart and saw  
A hunger curled and lean.

They said he drove about the town  
Hunting corners of the moon  
Before he took his fiddle down  
And began to tune  
The strings upon a look of grief.