

**The Lady Auditions for the Hard-Boiled Poet**

—let's see your stuff

he said

(the sun eating the hills

the moon anachronistic in the east)

—yes let's see your stuff

light me a fire sweetheart

(although it was too early for fire

the pavement still sweating blood)

—look:

those hands on the clock

are sticks of dynamite so

let's see your stuff

he said

(and the grass poked green

holes into space and the trees wept

silence like angels while in the park

an old man lay asleep

as winter beaches)

—alright enough

he said

(cutting the pageant of her face

into stragglers)

—let's see your stuff

damn it

I don't have much time

left.

—*Ken Stange*