

Umbrella

--Lynn Alexander

On the sidewalk where umbrellas bloom
the man without an umbrella eases
between those bright florets like a raccoon
in an oversized coat. That rain
is sluicing down his back
doesn't seem to bother him much,
he puts his hands in his pockets,
hunches his shoulders
and hears his old heart beat
against the rain.
People see the man without an umbrella
and walk by fast,
thinking he wants them to share
the stem of their own dry safety.
But the man without an umbrella is not afraid
of a little rain.
He travels light and hasn't far to go.

Pure Bred

--Lynn Alexander

Being the little Socialist that you are
you flip the bowl of bottled water with your paw
and lap up seepage from a muddy hole
while standing up to barks from a passing car.
You'll run around with the dirty and the clean,
ignoring commands as if you are a queen,
eat grass, used napkins, dirt and sand,
turn down dog food that's 3 bucks a can.
You'll share your toys and bones
with any old dog that comes along,
and don't protest when they try to take it home
'cause you know there's more where that came from.
Yours is a society without classes,
ranked simply by who's first at sniffing asses,
polite and patient with that down-on-his-luck
Jack Russell, rescued just last month.
You let him run first for a ball that's tossed
then when he least expects a double-cross,
you leap onto him and hump his rear
just to let him know you're still the boss.