

Amiri Baraka

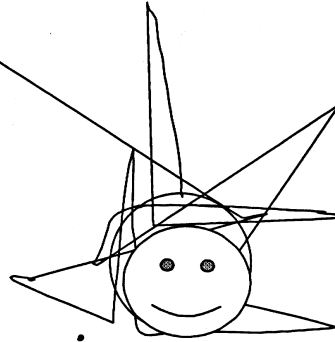
⚙️ ACTUAL OFF

I asked

A WOODEN NEGRO
WAS HE
LAUGHING
OR
CRYING

“I don’t know”,
he sd,

“Tell me
The difference”?



James Tate

ELEGY FOR SPOOKY

My dog, Spooky, would bring me the paper
in the morning. Then he would sit at the kitchen
table and watch me read it. When I was finished,
he would take it to the trashcan and drop it in.
Once, when I was raking leaves in the front yard,
a man jumped out of a tree and attacked me. Spooky
came running and immediately pinned the man to the
ground with a firm grip on his neck. In gratitude,
I took Spooky to his favorite restaurant in town
and bought him a T-bone steak. I talked to Spooky
all through dinner, just as I would anyone, and
he would nod and whimper. He understood every word
I said. One day we were walking in the country,
and suddenly we were surrounded by a pack of wolves.
I thought that was the end of us both. I was trembling
and praying and Spooky was snarling as if he meant it.
The wolves narrowed their circle, hissing. Spooky
started telling them wolf jokes, which at first
they didn't understand. But then one of them started
to laugh, then another, until the whole pack of
them was howling with amusement. I walked around
patting them on their heads and giving them dog
biscuits, which, of course, they had never had before.
I think Spooky just made those jokes up on the spot.
That night we drank champagne and feasted, grateful
to be alive. "Spooky," I said, "Spooky, Spooky."

Denise L. Stevens

f-STOP

the butterknife for emphasis
flings its everywhere
little frogponds of
little firestorms
(my father misspeaks: I wasn't
fabliau field flower
under the influence
(which function key finds me
flashy fallow
all bilabial fricatives have
help)) frustration
meaning
though they be not
born under those damn conifers)
ekphrasis? film speed?
phonemes
specifically: D's follies
[the boning knife enters
stage left]
fontanel fraternal
fronds I said
from a palmist's tree
sorry
I grew up thinking fuck
a fine word
not for sex but
in *fuchsia flagrans*
rhetorical finger-pointing
fourchette fountain
fortune's daughter

[that's a lovely forgetfulness
you've fermented there
sir may I have a fifth?]
folie a deux a trois
I am not proud of it
fuss or fizzle mister
there is no far
though the feng shui master free
the falconer and the chi