

"The Drinker's Dirge"
by An-Dinh Nguyen

They promised to make me the life of the party,
To make me more popular, jocular, hardy.
Just open that fridge up and open that can!
Just guzzle and chug it all down like a man!
They said that I couldn't have fun without booze;
They said I was young and had nothing to lose.

I was young, but foolish, with restless desire
To break from the boredom in which I was mired.
Beer's seeming virtues far outweighed its faults
As my road out of Snoozeville, away from adults,
From worries or cares about homework or school,
To anywhere people thought "buzzed" equaled "cool."

The dark side of alcohol, now very clear,
Was never revealed 'til I drank too much beer.
My friends thought it funny to see me so drunk.
I liked it too, though they said my breath stunk
Every time that I spoke. Then my speech became slurred
And I swayed as I walked 'cause my vision was blurred.
When I called it a night, though, nobody said, "No,
You can't drive yourself. You're too drunk to go."

Because no one else there was going home now,
I staggered alone to my car (God knows how).
Soon, dizzy and sleepy, I found myself steering
The car down the road while erratically veering
From far right to left, then from left back to right
Down the still, empty street so devoid of all light.
I indulged in the beer I had taken along
While I drove with one hand, thinking nothing was wrong.
But the alcohol deep in my blood took its toll:
As I drove on quite blindly, I just lost control.
I crashed. The sudden impact broke my neck,
Scraped the bark off the tree, left my car in a wreck.
This can't happen! I thought as I drew my last breath,
Dropped the can from my hand and lay bleeding to death.

They lied to me, told me to drink was to live,
But ruin's the only thing drinking can give.
It offered a high on which I could be carried,
But look at me now! Underground. Dead and buried.
They tricked me, deceived me; I should have ignored 'em.
Alcohol was a ticket from life, not just boredom.

The past can't be changed; my life is now over.
My greatest regret? I wish I'd stayed sober.