

THE PROSE POEM: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

Volume 6 | 1997

A Report On How It's Gotta Be Hard

James Grabill

© Providence College

The author(s) permits users to copy, distribute, display, and perform this work under the following conditions: (1) the original author(s) must be given proper attribution; (2) this work may not be used for commercial purposes; (3) the users may not alter, transform, or build upon this work; (4) users must make the license terms of this work clearly known for any reuse or distribution of this work. Upon request, as holder of this work's copyright, the author(s) may waive any or all of these conditions.

The Prose Poem: An International Journal is produced by
The Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress)
for the Providence College Digital Commons.
<http://digitalcommons.providence.edu/prosepoems/>

James Grabill

A REPORT ON HOW ITS GOTTA BE HARD

It's gotta be difficult, being a train station for the transmigration of souls, carrying the next century inside you, finding yourself visited by ancient great aunts and children, looking into the eyes of the dog and seeing something different: the dog's mother's eyes in her eyes, the deep thinking brain, luminous and dark and charged by her birth!

This might get me worried and protective. I'd want to protect the person I carry from prehistoric threats, from bad smoke and the snakes, from loud misgivings and heated-up appliances. It's gotta be tough, sitting comfortably as you slowly explode but hold smoothly, as you want to read the fetus Allende stories, as you walk outside and feel Neruda beside you like a second husband or boyfriend, the earth speaking its grief and joy around you, saying you are part of this bearing, this carrying.

It's gotta get hard pulling on your socks, reaching down to the floor to pick up the dropped onion, like so many women before, so many women with so many babies waking them at 2 a.m., waking them at 5, with lovers having their own thoughts, with houses having their own troubles. And the waiting, the planning, the suspension of the usual, the edge of not knowing, the breaking sunlight through the window, the luxurious Bach through Yo-Yo Ma's cello and intricacies of dried herbs, the listening strands of a friend's hair and the vitamins, the moral imperative, the laying back, the opening, cramping, in suffering pulses, the final extended volcanic passage and exhaustion.