

John Appling Sours

SUMMER MORNINGS AT THE ICE HOUSE

When I was a boy, I slept one summer
screened in on my grandmother's porch.
Mornings, I'd wake up early and watch
the icehouse man, a bear of a man
get out of his '37 Chevy and slide blocks of ice
across the scarred wood platform as his
cigar smoke curled like vines in the air above him.

I looked and listened alone, watching the morning sun
shimmering, gaining strength by seven, its heat
rising by noon over blazing dung scenting the air.
People came with wagons and carts and
the ice man stabbed away, down to the last slab,
chipping off fragments which turn to slush
by ten and oozed to the edge,
dripping, puddling until the sun slid behind the
houses
and waited for the moon to pass.
So much, good to look at, good to talk about,
happens in the morning.