Should cans stop being made?
Should all factories immediately close down?
What solution do you provide? If everyone's a poet and no one works, how do we survive?
The way St. Theresa survived on Light?
Love becomes a full-time job?
But where do we get the money to pay people not to work?

Slaves in Ancient Greece and Rome had 115 holidays a year!
Hey, wait a minute, that makes us more slaves than them!



## Richard Barsotti

## OAK AND RAIL

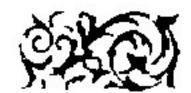
Golden Towers, Moravian House, Leisure Village, call them such; go ahead, euphemize, they will remain what they are, pre-fab holding tracks; shunted mono-cultures of old freight.

For two years my grandmother has lived on this line. Couldn't afford to maintain her home of sixty years, what with taxes and inflation, on 103 dollars monthly pension. Worked for it, that's all she did—work. Measured her worth by work, hard work to boot, like a boxcar.

I visted the other night. She can't mingle, that is, play games: bingo, parcheesi, crafts, the rest—-it's not in her.
"There's no art here," she said. "they make little things to set on furniture. Every morning I breathe deep at the window. I miss the yard, even if I bobble around. Others go by pairs, like swans, in the jitney, downtown to see what's hoppin'."

She goes by quadra-cane, alone, to buy vegetables and fruit on Cherry St.—a one-way street, easier to cross at ninety. She waits like the railroad ties. The cop directing traffic yells, "Come on, come on, do you think I can wait all day!" She smiles, replying, "Why, if I'd known you were waiting for me, I'd of run across." he'd wait all day if she were nineteen.

After a few hours talking, we settle into silence. I write, she knits, with pencil-thick needles now; with knuckles like crossed roots. Still the motion is smooth as a train over the prairie, tapping. Oak and rail gently rising, falling—breathing—breathing.



## S. L. Berry

## IN A RESTAURANT WITH WALT WHITMAN

Just coffee, I tell the waitress and Walt says, "I think I could turn and live awhile with the animals. . ."

Darla's not comin' in, I overhear, She's too upset he just up and left, and I blink pouring cream

into the steaming cup "They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins. . ."