

BILLY

Shelby Stephenson

Hair hackled, front legs flexed
 he arched his back to poise
 the neighbor boy
 off the high porch when Uncle drove
 up in his new used peagreen Firechief Pontiac,
 Palm Beach suit, Panama hat, Italian desert boots.
 He'd had a nip or two
toddy for the body
 Billy stetched and
 straightened his tail in a beeline when
 he saw his reflection in Uncle's car
 running up over the hood
 the hard rapid light patter of hooves in a
 sort of buttroll whipping and whirling about the top,
 feet every which way flashing tail twitching pills
let's play doctor
 he got his monkeywrench lunged after Billy —
 we chased Uncle in our heads
 trying to give him some pills,
 the wrench already missing the goat
 when all in a diving woosh and
 surge behind the biggest oak in the yard
 Billy bleated at Uncle climbing in his automobile,
 a cluster of goatballs
 under the seat of his Palm Beach pants.