

ONE MORNING, ONE MAN, FAR AWAY

Marky swung his leg
Over the trampled fencing
A motion not unlike his method
Of sliding into his homeroom desk
All he can think of today
Is then
For his high school yesterdays
Are not far behind him
The familiar faces, the good times, the music
All flood his mind

And they shouldn't

Right now he must concentrate
Focus on today - the here and now
Eyes scan the arid field before him
Punctuated with scrub bushes
Forty meters southwest stands the remains
Of a farmhouse wall
Just last year this had been a working farm
Now its gone
Along with real memories, lively songs, serious faces
An erased reality
It all just seems too empty
When a scruffy goat wanders through

He smiles

His line of sight locks then blanks
Just before it starts to swirl
A broad open meadow
Rimmed in golden leafed trees
Unmown, parched grasses; collapsed under their own weight
Are covered in silver gray late October frost
Buffalo Hunter Plaid and a bright orange hat
Replace standard issue desert camo.
Instead of his heavy automatic rifle
He cradles an ancient Winchester 30.06
Listening for reports from fellow hunters rifles in distant woods
Seeking Vermont's best trophy bucks

Suddenly he is jerked back to today's reality
the ~~red brick~~ ^{ferret} wall collapses
Automatically he drops and sprawls
On hard caked dry ground
An unbearably thick crushing sound wave
Deafens to black

Soon soft breezes waft across
His prone figure
Slowly he realizes his face now lies
In cool thick grasses
A feeling of serenity courses
through his chest
Distant sounds of vaguely pleasant music
Fill his groggy ears
Raising his head he slowly opens his eyes
Into gentle morning light
Lifting himself up he sees those lush sweeping fields
That are Elysium