

Introduction to “Iambic Non-Prose”

In his book of poetry, *Pterodactyl Rose*, conscientiously taught in my high school by a devotee of the poet as well as a former college student of his, William Heyen decries the construction and existence of malls for the destruction that they wreak on the local environment. The paving of their parking lots dislocates various life forms, both fauna and flora. The commercial / retail structures destroy what used to be beautiful scenery.

You can just imagine the reaction of the typical teenagers – if there are such beings – to this attack on what has become to many of them a social gathering place as well as a location for them to practice the fine art of shopping, window or otherwise. (It is ironic to me that these very malls face a kind of extinction themselves as they are more and more challenged by online shopping conglomerates such as Amazon and Internet entities which extend the reach of the retail chains that populate the malls.)

I decided one day to combat the heavy load of human responsibility extant in Heyen’s book (well-earned though it might be regarding human interaction with the dodo, nuclear proliferation and various forms of pollution) and add some humor to the student-reader load by producing a pro-mall poem. I do go overboard in exaggerating my dedication to the stores one might find in a typical mall. The poem becomes a sort of ode to the glory of direct shopping --- but always with a sense of humor. I do not mean to disparage Heyen’s rather noble effort to warn us to get off the path we are on (in the tradition of George Orwell, Aldous Huxley, William Golding, Ayn Rand and even Suzanne Collins). I just want to lighten the mood with the hope that a relaxed mind, free from panic and urgency, is a clear mind that can see the road to a better, safer future for all the inhabitants of our planet – again, both fauna and flora.

Once again, you will find the influence of Robert Frost. I actually visited his grave in Bennington, Vermont as well as the home he wrote some of his most famous poems in a couple of summers ago. The man was a genius and his wisdom, I hope, has affected me in some small way.