

# Diagnosis

*by Gary Hardaway*

## **The Condition My Condition Is in**

Often too drunk to read.  
Never too drunk to write.

## **Field Study**

Don't call me lazy.  
I am studying the way  
dust bunnies emerge, grow  
and apparently reproduce.  
From the cat hair, lint,  
and dead skin cells,  
agglomerations  
of surprising scope and scale.

## **Dead to the Dying**

Oil- the poisoned gift  
of one mass extinction  
to another- ours.

## **On the Beauty of the Universe**

The nebulae you ooh  
and ahh over in the Hubble

photographs would kill you  
in a millisecond were you

close enough to touch them.  
Were they still there.

### **Any Given Day**

The gray day bears down  
with cloud-soft but persistent force.  
It doesn't so much crush the spirit  
as it smothers it.

### **Hearing that Someone Beautiful Is in Hospice**

Instead of killing someone beautiful,  
kill me. I'm fine with my dying  
and so are those closest to me.  
I am ready to die. She is not.

Take me instead, Death, you  
detached and numerical shit.  
I'm a number. Take me instead.  
The tally sheet will look the same.

