**The Man in the Moon**

Ken Homer

The man in the moon

lost an eye in 1902,

a victim of modern science

and the artillery shell carrying

a select group

of learned greybeards

on a great lunar adventure.

They were, of course, oblivious

to the damage they had done

and took a nap.

Refreshed, they did

what usually comes next

and started killing moonmen,

each moonman disappearing effortlessly

in a great puff of smoke.

It seems the moonmen were quite adept at dying.

But fear not.

The tale ends happily

as Melies, that great French showman,

cut to the chase

and the earthlings clambered into

their ‘spaceship”

and fell back to earth.

Children, what have we learned?

Lesson 1:

Science destroys myth without making full restitution.

Sublunary lovers now spoon in June

- or any other time-

under a rocky mass,

captured by our gravitational field,

and the whole place is likely to be strip mined.

Lesson 2:

Sad cafes will serve Moonburgers (registered trademark)

which will send the new moonmen

from this new world into the next—

slowly.

But without a puff of smoke,

Lesson 3:

Moonmen may be killed because they are different from us.

Lesson 4:

After the initial sorting out,

mass tourism will not be good for any surviving moonmen.

Lesson 5:

We have no respect for earth,

so other worlds are not to be respected either.

Lesson 6:

We will repeat all of our previous mistakes but with greater efficiency.

Life has become so simple,

and our imagination becomes more uncluttered with every passing year.

Farewell to metaphor,

to flights of fancy.

Farewell to Alignak and Artemis

to Cerridwen and Chang’e.

Farewell to Diana, Hecate and Selene

to the moonstruck and earthstuck,

to childlike fascination.

And farewell to the moon’s

benign countenance,

poor one-eyed sycophant.