

## Alan Perry

### The day after

his first poem is published  
gathers like a rustling mountain  
of leaves waiting  
for stomping joy to scatter  
tree-breath across the yard.

*There are ways  
the dying say goodbye  
are lines too somber  
as birds bank into breezes  
and ball games tally  
winners and losers.*

Country western tunes trail  
down a sanitized hallway  
until they can't be heard  
where blinds are drawn  
and a curtain coils the moment  
when his soft, curled hands  
are squeezed once more—  
*and then are still.*

**Alan Perry** holds a B.A. in English from the University of Minnesota. He is a member of the Loft Literary Center in Minneapolis, and is involved in poetry programs at the University of Arizona Poetry Center. He has won poetry awards from the League of Minnesota Poets and Arizona State Poetry Society, and his poems have appeared in *Gnarled Oak*, *Sandcutters* and *The Moccasin*. He and his wife divide their time between a suburb of Minneapolis and Tucson, Arizona.