

## Paul Bamberger – Two Poem

### Citizens By Night

day ends sky pales evening shadows hard against the chaos  
the crowd gathered to watch their city rise to the sun is gone  
figures bent to their shadows make their way along the broad avenues  
the homeless nod ask nothing of them  
on corners boys make their jokes rifle-shot of laughter  
in rooms young women turn to mirrors  
only to find there what seems not their rumored selves  
what is whispered about the city in its swift give and take swallows up  
river pitches its green warning  
pigeons keep to window ledges  
down alley ways neon looking to take a life  
moon on the rise dog on the prowl  
and yet for a few bucks the sweet promise of things going one's way  
and the hawkers come to the street looking to sell only the one thing  
old men squat in doorway shadows keeping awake listening to what the street has to  
say  
women huddled to their coats hurry by  
young men lean against walls smoking thinking why not anyway  
workers out of the factories caught in the crosshairs of river light hurry home  
boys born to the street climb back fences into the long season of the lie  
looking for clarity where clarity is sought after after hours  
but find there is always the catch always the thing unproposed  
and in the joints the pale women dance the evening out on what the boys who have  
nothing to say say  
can't they talk these boys  
each answering to the absurdity of his own question  
their talk backing the pale women up against a wall  
where hands that know their thighs slap the years beneath their skirts  
flesh is where bone shows its wound  
but the pale women know not to let these boys down  
in dance timing is everything  
and with first light the petty criminals jack it all in for some low rent memory and hurry  
home  
the cart men come to the streets looking to tell their one joke  
a woman walks a bridge  
morning burns through the night

## **Farmer In Paradise**

in Vermont there's a road the Pike Hollow Road  
i have driven the seven miles down the Pike Hollow road to its end  
weathered farmhouse up against the Green Mountain wilderness  
old farmer bent to hoe working small garden  
i say  
paradise  
without breaking from his work without looking up he says  
used ta be

**Paul Bamberger** holds an MFA Degree in English/Creative Writing from the University of Massachusetts/Amherst, and teaches at Northern Essex Community College in Lawrence, MA. He has published several books of poetry, *Down by the River* being his most recent book published by Islington-bryer Press. Bamberger's poems have appeared in the *New Hampshire Review*, *North Essex Review*, *Stoneboat*, *Ibettson Street*, *Chiron* and *Agenda* (London) magazines.