

## **Dixon Hearne – Two Poems**

### **Trawling Day**

Hoarfrost clings to the balding cypress,  
whose gray beards glisten in the dawning  
along the bayous and river's trace.  
Boats split the stillness with a  
grunt and chug of fussy motors.  
Sleepy trawlers spit and mutter,  
drawing lines from the wintering channel,  
lugging near-frozen catch into the hold.  
Line by line, they make their way  
down the serpentine course  
of the ancient Ouachita—  
from Sterlington to Endom Bridge,  
where markets scale and clean  
and trim the bounty for display  
in open troughs along the storefront,  
while buyers sip chicory  
and haggle over prices  
till the urns are drained  
and morning is spent.

### **Coming of Winter in the Delta**

Night winds wail and moan—  
nature's wake for autumn's parting.  
A chevron of fattened geese splits the graying sky,  
headed for warmer climes—winter fast at their tails.

Homeward march the tired hunters  
through waist-high Indian grass,  
the day too far gone to clean their kill—  
carcasses heaped upon the porch  
where the cold will keep them 'til dawn,  
when the house awakens to a chatter  
of squirrels shaking numbness and morning chill  
from the limbs of an ancient walnut tree—  
followed by a boisterous stir  
to stave off pilferers bent on  
staking claim to the windfall below.

There is hay yet to be stacked  
in the waiting lofts of a tilting barn,  
and cords to be split and hauled  
to the south-facing walls,  
where vermin will take up residence  
ahead of a brutal delta winter  
presaged by the local elders—  
whose tacit wisdom trumps  
the holy almanac every time.

**Dixon Hearne** writes in the American South. He is the author of seven books of poetry and fiction. His work has been twice nominated for the Pushcart Prize, as well as the PEN/Hemingway and PEN/Faulkner awards. His latest book is *Plainspeak: New and Selected Poems*. Other poetry appears in *Poetry South*, *Tulane Review*, *Arkansas Review*, *Chiron Review*, *Big Muddy*, *New Plains Review*, *Weber: The Contemporary West*, *The Southern Poetry Anthology, IV: Louisiana*, *Down to the Dark River* anthology (LA-Lit Press), and elsewhere. He is currently working on a new poetry collection. [www.dixonhearne.com](http://www.dixonhearne.com)