

Barry W. North

The End

After years of tending
to the daily and nocturnal garden
of his needs with no results,
the end arrives
like an out-of-body experience
there is no coming back from,
even when the miracle
you always prayed for
finally happens,
and you hear him,
far beneath you,
in the world you cannot return to,
swearing his love for you,
up and down,
unaware of the fact
nothing he will ever say or do,
can touch you now.

Barry W. North is a sixty-eight year old retired refrigeration mechanic. Since his retirement in 2007, he has been nominated twice for a Pushcart Prize, won the 2010 A. E. Coppard Prize for Fiction. More recently he won Honorable Mention in the 2011 Allen Ginsberg Poetry Awards. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in *The Paterson Literary Review*, *Slipstream*, *The Dos Passos Review*, *Hawaii Pacific Review*, *Green Hills Literary Lantern*, *Amoskeag* and others. He has published two chapbooks. *Along the Highway*, a fiction chapbook, was published by White Eagle Coffee Store Press in 2010. His first chapbook of poems, *Terminally Human*, was published in 2013 by Finishing Line Press. For more information visit his website <http://www.barrynorth.org/>