

OPEN SEASON

Cracked open by rimfire
the dawn comes up like thunder
spraying light as brazenly
as the lurching figures in our woods
spray bullets toward imaginary prey.

The saltlick stands enormous by the soap.
And our deer, as if divining
a crazed conjunction of the city
and the country, have fled in broken
ranks to higher ground beyond the interval.

In times of war, machismo parades
as valor. Cretins turn heroes overnight.
Bloodlust spreads like brushfire in the wind.
L.L. Bean guarantees nothing.
The urge to howl is strong.

Condemned by our love of life
we peer forth from an unarmed arsenal
with brute respect for the phallic
machinery, the beady-eyed intransigence
of these lifetime champions of the NRA.

Lewis H. Miller, Jr.