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Breakfast At the Olive Tree

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Peggy S. Kurpinski

I order two eggs over easy
but always get three.
Coffee served by the pot
as many refills as you want.
A fat lady tries to squeeze into the booth
large breasts rest on the table top.
A blind man sits in the corner booth
same order as yesterday.
Eggs at 3 O'clock, bacon at 9
potatoes at 6 and coffee at 12.
The waitress wipes yellow yoke strings
from the blind man's beard.
Refilling his cup, "Coffee's full, Ed, and hot!"
    she adds two creams, one sugar and stirs, "All set."
A tall man with wild white hair sits at the counter,
    smoking, his fingers stained black, drinking coffee.
Jimmy in his stained white apron at the cash register
    counting money, "How's your friend? You know who I mean."
He smiles at everyone, tells old jokes
    and makes people laugh at the silly things he says.
"I'm 63, goin' to sell da place to my kids.
    I work for them, only one year. I go to Florida then."
On Sundays, lines wait at the door after church
    for eggs and coffee, and a chance to read the paper.
I sit in the back corner with coffee and my book,
    watching the morning activity.

Sleeping
Peggy S. Kurpinski

I was young
    and couldn't sleep
restless in my bed
I would wander down the hall
into the living room
crawl onto the brown overstuffed

Later, I would wake in hot sweat
    to see a glow in the shadows
a red glow, like one eye of a
    sitting on the arm of my father
In silence I'd watch the eye flare

glow bright orange for a minute
    and fly back to the arm of the chair
In silence I'd watch him smoke
pretending I was asleep.
He'd wait me out, sitting and
soon I would be asleep again.