

David Ignatow is the author of **FIGURE OF THE HUMAN**, **RESCUE THE DEAD** and **SAY PARDON**, in the Wesleyan poetry series. His **COLLECTED POEMS** and **JOURNALS** will be published in 1971, and he currently has a Rockefeller grant.

### **EXPRESS YOUR WILL**

Seeing a patch of sky through the trees  
I look for a paratrooper  
to float down through the leaves  
and beg pardon for his intrusion  
and ask if I enjoy the weather, sunny and mild.  
Of course, of course, I'll answer  
enthusiastically and he will unlimber  
his gun from his shoulder  
and fill me with lead.  
I thought so, he will say.  
I expected you would find the weather good.  
Now take a look at me, he will add,  
and turn the gun on himself  
and pull the trigger. That's to show you  
what I really think, he'll say.  
But I'll be dead, leaving him for others  
to study. I'll want to die,  
my sympathy with him.  
How should I live in a stupor,  
a gun at my side  
as all the others run and hide  
to let me stalk them out  
with flame and bullet?  
Change, change, change  
into a paratrooper.  
Make yourself a hunter,  
kill, express your will.

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It was when I shot him  
that I felt him  
in his staring mouth.