

THE BIG BURN

JENNIFER LAGIER

She is a housing advocate
forever trying to fit
single mothers
and more kids than allowed
by the rules
into decent apartments.

Places where deposits
can be paid in installments
and the landlord
doesn't expect sex on demand
as a portion of rent.

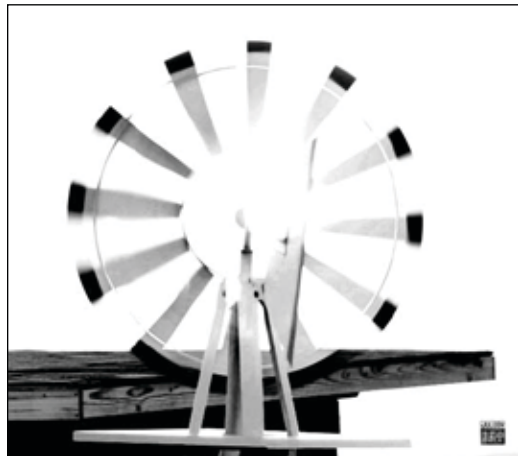
Her clients, a family of five,
live in wet caves
carved from the Monterey mud,
pay \$20 a night.

Later, at the labor camp,
a contractor
collects once a week
but never pays P.G. & E.
so they do without power.

They relocate to a barn
with blankets on lettuce crates,
no running water.
An eight year old boy
reads to his little sister
in a cow stall with candles.

At the inquest, survivors tell
of finding melted baby-doll limbs
among blackened bones,
the charred commas of children
turned into ashes.

JULEEN JOHNSON



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WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD WE LIVE IN

KEN CUNEO

The morning sun at Lover's Point clears away the fog exposing an opening rose.
The evening news said that the mother hung her kids and burned their clothes.
Oh what a joy for those with cash as the Dow Jones, NASDAQ, and hedge funds
soar.

They were just trying to correct bad behavior; so the kids were placed in cages on
the floor.

An evening stroll at Asilomar pets naturally along for the ride.

The jealous ex poured gasoline into the East Alisal trailer, "I'll burn her hide!"

The bride and groom at Bernardus toasted one another, such visions of bliss.

Thousands of miles away in Iraq, artillery shells smash a house; something is
amiss!

The Carmel CEO turned the keys on his new Mercedes; along with his fourth
trophy wife.

The poor bastard who cleans the CEO's store can't even pay his basic living
expenses, will he take his life?

The wealthy family used their connections to get their oh so ordinary child to go
Ivy League.

The Marine Corps Lance Corporal from Seaside, trying to earn enough money
for college, now blinded will he ever again read?

The beautiful Pebble Beach maven is going for a seaweed wrap at the spa.

While the waitress from Marina was fired for not giving favors to her boss; she
sure won't go far!

The old saying about either the glass half full or empty

Does not work with me for I see people with nothing or plenty.

Can you still say it is a wonderful and fair world we live in?