

[Home](#)

[Summer 2006](#)

[Spring 2006](#)

[Winter 2006](#)

[Fall 2005](#)

[Summer 2005](#)

[Spring 2005](#)

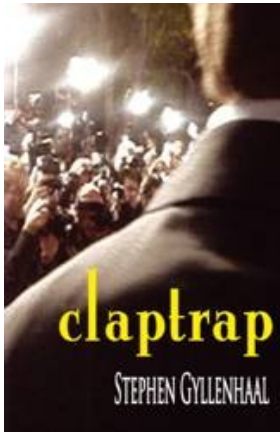
[Winter 2005](#)

[Editor's Note](#)

[Guidelines](#)

[SNR's Writers](#)

[Mail](#)



[These poems were reprinted from Stephen Gyllenhaal's new book from Cantarabooks LLC. It's entitled *Claptrap*. For more information or to buy the book, click this link.](#)

EXCERPTED FROM CLAPTRAP

THREE POEMS

BY STEPHEN GYLLENHAAL

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Land of the Free

Can't disney this away,
can't prozac it back
into the warm sofa
of this once obedient chest.
The grand chandelier
that's turning like a satellite
demanding utter allegiance
and the closer attention
that should have been paid
to grammar, to the names
and statistics of all
the ballplayers
has lost its grip
on the color pink
mistaking it
for the space between
the first and second
amendments.

Communion

It's not a big thing
when the BMW pulls over
silver blue and German grace
and the Guatemalan gardener adjusts his hip
along the nearby ridge
with his leaf blower and rake
half noting the pure white man inside
with his acceptable rock music
choking
weeping
hands shivering over the eyes
weeping till the cows come home
weeping for whatever nameless loss
he's found
as Guatemala
back and forth with his machine
sweeps the rattling leaves

along a green back of Nichols Canyon
like a priest with incense.

The Enron in My Face

The Enron in my face is unmistakable
for I have borrowed millions
against the accounts of my father,
secreting them in the hope chest
of my parents' wedding dreams:
a large pine box affair
with a red heart painted
on the upside-down lid.

Though we kept the creditors at bay
for generations by appearing to scrub
the dishes with soap and misery,
it fell to me to lose sight of the ball completely
and seal the bankruptcy.

I must now let the Lear jet of it fade,
head into the desert outside Houston,
find as many false gods as I can and pray.

As with indigestion, I keep telling myself
I had only a little to do with it,
but the overeating of desserts gives me away.

Raised in rural Pennsylvania, **Stephen Gyllenhaal** graduated with a BA in English from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. He is an award-winning film/television director (*Paris Trout*, *Waterland*, *Twin Peaks* season two) and director-screenwriter (*Homegrown*), whose poetry has been published in literary quarterlies such as *Prairie Schooner*, *Nimrod*, and *Apalachee Review*. He currently lives in Los Angeles.

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