

LINES ON GENE & FATHER LOUIE *

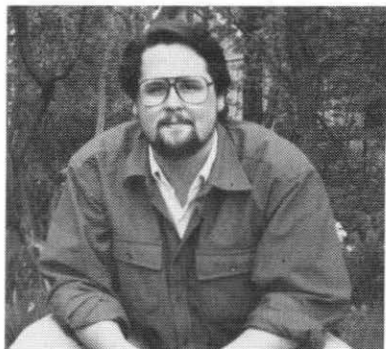
by **Jonathan Sweeney**

Photos of picnic occasions
and farmyards,
reminiscences of friends
but nothing on those boots and
socks of Louie's laced tight.

His eyes so soft,
and a face full of sun,
arms loose like handles
on an old
wheelbarrow.

Tom, I wish,
would disavow those boots,
banish the socks and
all care for the wrinkled
callouses of the discalced.

He wants —
not like redwings
along Kentucky fence posts
ruminating —
But listening, laughing,
disarming even the patience of trees.



JONATHAN SWEENEY

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* *Father Louie: Photographs of Thomas Merton by Ralph Eugene Meatyard*; edited by Barry Magid (New York: Timken Publishers, 1991).