

M. P. RITGER
Evergreen Cemetery, 1990

Now that I am
free from all I love
 the black scaffold
of the bare
magnolia still
 standing at
the lip of

spring when sex
 will gather
and furl
on its limbs
 like dust
on shelves I see
the full

 bloom slum
coming and
the tramp stamp
 sunlight of
summer muscling
the alabaster
 blossoms off

in a wind
shaken off
 as a dog
flings water
from fur
 wrung water
blossoms flung

earthward
 garden-
ward white
wax petals
 drifting in
the grass as
snow is now

M. P. RITGER

like chips at a
sculptor's feet
now even
in the green
deaf of leaf
I hear
the bare tree's

disappearance
reappear
for me
winter stricken
ribs throb
through the earth's
green dress

and reflect
in the dun
sheen
of the meltwater
pond now
that I am
free from

all I love