

# Brando

Holly Welker

Marlon Brando's such a babe in *Guys and Dolls*,  
it's an ideal, makes you feel  
positively reverent, same as orange blossoms,  
the way they delicately ask to seduce  
the delicate insides of your nostrils.  
Or Pre-Raphaelite women, large, lovely,  
looking like they never need or want to speak,  
wearing nothing or wearing clothes  
made from fabric that ought to cover couches.

When I was five I had cowboy boots, I had a hat,  
I had chaps and a holster for my own tiny cap gun.  
The gun was smooth and silver and gave me  
the bang and the odor without hassles  
of targets to hit or not hit.  
It was one of life's truly useful things:  
It helped me change what was real  
into what I wanted to believe,  
like asking "Is that the Milky Way?"  
when you know it's clouds,  
like letting margins be the places  
where we make notes and plans,  
draw question marks and stars.

Now when what I believe gets too elegant,  
I remember Brando in *Apocalypse Now*,  
fat, angry, full of death;  
I remember a roof being patched, a street resurfaced,  
the scent of orange blossoms assaulted,  
extinguished by the smell of hot tar.