



10-2014

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Recommended Citation

Howells, Anna (2014) "And the Heat Goes On," *Inscape*: Vol. 34 : No. 1 , Article 19.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/inscape/vol34/iss1/19>

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AND THE HEAT GOES ON

by Ann Howells

October: the sure finger of God has set
the Texas oven on *high*,
 construction crews drip like candles,
 office towers rise like muffins,
and a rapist stalks East Dallas—
choosing victims on jogging trails
 and grocery store parking lots,
hiding behind an ordinary face.

There are those who claim
 he's sure to be illegal;
others blame an unidentified black man.
FBI profiler says he's white, single,
 20 to 35, un- or under-employed,
 resentful of women. No shit, Sherlock!
The artist sketch resembles Homer Simpson.

The clerk at Kroger says women ask for it,
but we've already pegged him:
 a creepy little twerp 20 to 35,
 under-employed, resentful, but
 not resembling the sketch.
Jo says our have/have not economy
 produces thieves and rapists;
Sidney ties rape to ice cream sales. Uh-uh.

Summer is on overtime,
every blazing sun a golden dollar,
cumulous fails to accumulate. The heat
 goes on, and cool won't come.
We hear rattles at our doorknobs,
 glimpse shadows at windows,
 sweat in our locked rooms,
stalked relentlessly in unrelenting heat.