

Rachel Loden

Clueless in Paradise

*“Kenneth, what is the frequency?”
– query to Dan Rather from
unidentified assailants*

Sometimes, when you shake your head,
it is like snow settling
on the little village in the paperweight.

Other times, it's not – and that's why
God made the Bradley Fighting Vehicle.
He can't always put a plaque up

on the spot. Sometimes even He
is forced to settle for a souvenir. Perhaps
Flopsy the Bunny isn't what you want,

and yet you won her at the fair. Like we won
a great victory against Iraq (applause).
Tie a yellow ribbon 'round my eyes,

whirl me in circles, send me careering
toward the map. I love humanity. I'll stick
a pushpin into any random dot, and smile

endearingly. I'm a consultant. And nude
– I mean, naked – aggression, is what this thing
is all about, plus Bernie Shaw

quavering beneath a table when the smart
bombs start coming in, and Dan Rather
looking itchy in his sweater. Kenneth,

what *is* the frequency? Men on CNN
are weeping and surrendering, kneeling
while they kiss their captors' hands.

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