

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.

—first appeared in *Exquisite Corpse*