

DEAN YOUNG

Now That Tomáš and Jim Are Gone

I worry poetry's out there alone
with a hurt paw. In a paper sack
in a New Jersey rest-stop. Could it hurt
to fall to my knees? To flaunt
my disorderly crawl? I tried to throw
a search-party while it swung above us
like tomato juice in case we got skunked.
In case we got politicized by tar.
Meanwhile it was glimpsed across town
in someone else's underwear. It wasn't
even Halloween. Once I held my breath
nearly long enough. Once I woke
as if dipped in ants. Ant biting my eyelid
mad about a plum, ant on its planet cranium.
Granite too is mostly air, only
my thick-headedness stops me
from walking through walls. Poetry
doesn't mean, it incinerates.
Meanwhile it appeared as a kachina
in a gas station in Mexico. A flattened
bottlecap looking animate in yellow
shadow. Sometimes kerosene opens the sky
in a puddle. Dew, excessively. I touched
her breasts in a dream. Some kids in the park
pulled tight a rope between two trees
and tried to walk it. My dog senses
something invisible in the pyracantha
that wants to play without any irritable
reaching after fact or reason.

Sleepers Awake

I didn't want to start the day
with a list of what makes me sad
so I canceled that appointment,
put away the X-rays, put on my torn
red shirt and hugged my darling
hard enough to taste the beach
on her shoulder. How does she do that
1,000 miles from the sea? Unfurtively,
I admire her breasts which isn't creepy
because of our relationship during which
the time spent washing dishes, changing
air filters and picking up dog poop etc.
must be equal to or less than
the time spent admiring her breasts
from my perspective. In fact, the whole
waterproof get-up of that body she's wearing
which fits so perfectly without scrunching
or pinching. I like how she can sit down
and stand up and hop without ripping.
I lick the places where it attaches to her soul.
They taste like alfalfa.

Unprotected

It's been days since hoppy frog was wound up
but he's still got jump.

Like a dead bee.

Like a liberal arts education.

Like a tree storing lightning inside itself.

Like a window broken in a good way.

Like cardiac tissue.

Like when the apprentice assigned
to paint the background shrubbery
has some sort of fit

like when the soul blazes out in the eternal
and pierces your foot

like in Blake.

Not torn in two with gray claws.

Not rotting deep in the pancreas.

Not being hung upside-down.

Not the stabbed-out eye of a peacock.

Not losing your virginity to a scarecrow.

The sky will fill our graves.

The sea is made entirely of bells.

I love you.