

Glen Armstrong

The Bedside Book of Awkward Silences

I described the ancient art of demolition
to the younger generation.

Feral children punched each other in the arm
as a means to describe the moon.

I could not hear your description of airplanes.
You were too far away,

and the night sky's
piano solo
lowered our resistance to beauty.

The Civil War reenactors
described each other as "yeller sons-of-bitches."

We were all there for a reason,
and it wasn't to solve the mystery
of why we were there.

One of the reenactors suggested we join hands
in prayer

which set one of the feral children
off to screaming,

and we all agreed that screaming
was the most awkward silence of all.

Eloquence (And Thus Poetry)

I struck the wooden match against its box.
Her sock caught fire.

I unlaced her shoe, and she let me.
Both of us had been burned before.

"Sparrow, my dear, you are my hero,"
I confessed as the flame flickered.

"It's merely a case of the shoe,
the fit that fire throws
and the elsewhere that a foot
must cling to in cases
such as these,"

she whispered,
further disturbing

the flame by beating
the pretty, white wings on her ankles.

Midsummer XXXIII

My child has her cape

The match its blue tip

The whisper never wanted

Its cage

(Its cage)

The whistle its rape

Theatrical lighting and sound

Their low frequencies

And the audience is as shameless

With its hands as its hiss

There was a girl they all called

Piss Queen

The sticky playbills all caught up

In a makeshift twister

She drops her skull

Unlocks her teeth

But it's her shoes

(It's her shoes)

That make their point.