

Steve Gilmartin

Waterfall

Floating but moving fast, it seemed like just another difficult day at first, you get used to them, and then his breath went over the lip, falling into ion trails, a weave of refractions drifting in memory. Free of binding connections, those chutes of thought, continuous leaden subtraction, carried along as though loosened from a spillway. No figuring why or which way but just gravity sounding.

In his mind he was riding a blizzard, the one that takes everything away.

Then it spoke to him in harsh claw-black robes, a clipped yet reasonable statement of administrative exhaustion, relief, and an end to all appealing.

The noise on the phone going over almost erased the connection. You could hear how deafened his voice was. The silence encompassed it like an ocean system, weather multiform and spiraling. As the bonds curved around him, he faced backward and found a pleasure from childhood, our eyes attending.

C&W

The country blurred by, briefly illuminated through the window, a burst of color in the night drizzle. I knew about your child and that you rubbed colored powders into her fur. She has fur yet is charming and popular. You saw a specialist for her or more probably for both of you you said, and at the very moment you were rubbing her with powder the color of gemstones, I was riding around on a bus. The driver's radio was playing a country and western song that sounded like an orderly progression of ornate mathematical equations. The bus completed its route and I could see you on the sidewalk, encircled and stationary in a spectral rodeo that materialized from a lasso of light. Concerned, I jumped off the bus, but you had been doing it on purpose. We played Flick the Spider while we calmed down. Your child was there and the three of us walked down the street together happily. No squabbling. "The powder works," you said bouncing up and down. We walked like musical notes blending in the European style. A rainbow appeared briefly on our right. The country remained on the other side of a pane of glass covered with hairline scratches and tiny footprints.

Blue Energy of Heaven

Dangling over them, the blue energy of heaven.

We are foundational, the family of origin, invisible and interlocking. Maybe you know the statuary.

Deflections are infinite. Straight from their bottom-of-the-sea destinies, here they are, the mishapen and dragged bronze-clothed masses. But see how those starry eyes, the depthless, exquisite colors of glass, announce the splendor of drowning.

Some spells only last so long, some work forever.

Thus ecstatic devotees throw themselves beneath the time-bound wheely lord of the world so sweetly, sour cries touching one another, all difficulty folding.

Family Steak

Because of the periodic influx of meat, he didn't know how to think. He came to a fork: follow the meat or follow the money. Both bled back. The family was a mile long but had been compressed into the density of a house. In photographs, it usually looked like an object fallen dead and dark against the snow. Meanwhile, he was famished. He looked around: meat was being pampered, sitting there like a fourth son. Someone told him about how the amygdala brings you into the present.

At the beach, pre-eating tension forms a circle called the horizon. Then, finally, the punctuation of feeding. The TV simmers and becomes everybody's stove. Night programs are applied like glaze; they bubble up into and over the brainpan. In the recipe book, letters arrange themselves on a guided tour of animalia.

Like all periods, this one—given to planetary cuisine's delicate, white interlocking circles—ends in crisis. One's meat needs come sailing back. No one he knows, not even the dog, remembers how it works. First, sear to seal in the juices?

My Mind Is Made Up

The flow of movers ceased at age seven. Camouflaged in their white overalls and gloves, they carried in the entire rule of numbers cast as impossibly heavy sheets of glass. We're moving through a building that cycles forever, like water in a fountain (architecture bellows and sucks back the origins of its destruction), and over there, dream rubbings are roughed out and rendered visible. Hoisted onto its side and guided in, mind drifts and reassembles in air pockets between glass and film, projectors and plinths. Now dream sites can continue to press their forms and contours into internal soft clay gullies. Night day pulsing equals the push in the wrist. There's a tendency to flatten through explanation: for example, existence is a small *a* surrounded by a circle. What's invisible gets on hind legs to look over the cap of the dream. What does the accompanying text say? "Wait around while you flow." Think of the sound of a brook, light underlying piano arpeggios rendering everything false. Thus are the materials corrupted. A celebrity arrives bringing the Everyone Else problem, and the world becomes a gallery goer. This writing is full of conceit, deception, confusion, infiltration. Never mind, the address is good. The delivery signature belongs to a body. Just inches more. As the exhibition opens, voices and movement draw up into the echoing cupola.