

Mike Rosen

## Hope Isn't Just About the Future

It is also the end  
without ending, it is  
administered arsenic,  
poisoned eyelashes. Oh,  
to be alive, until not.  
Ancient courage  
meet cliff,  
meet cell count-- interrupted , rock  
puppets, blood bags, board games,  
photos hung in homes  
never lived in again.

Oh, when you put language  
in the right hands  
even the mundane  
begins to sparkle.

(a NY Times Erasure)

## Kink

Gleam,  
a marvel of a word  
I grow inside  
myself. Tunnels,  
the only way out,  
the tiniest freedom  
in a city of crowded  
angels. One option:  
let open  
the countryside,  
patios, furniture, trade it  
for a clean normal,  
a slow suicide. Arrest me  
in your bed, officer  
I don't know --  
what else I can say  
without my hands tied? Yes,  
Yes, hammer, nail, unchain me  
from myself, God,  
yes, bang, a word  
thrust against me, bang  
even the firing squad knows:  
the bullet is always a surprise,  
bang, the hole of a man,  
filing out to meet  
the noon, sun-thirsty  
earth, the wound  
hallowing, gurgling,  
gleaming.