

## OPENING MY EYES IN THE DARK

There's a poem writing itself on my wall at 3:00 am.

On a black ladder cast by moonlight's halo  
through the blinds, the blurry-finned shadows  
of Sumac leaves arrange themselves into  
breeze-charmed meters on each rung  
as I listen to the tree's blithe branches  
scratch out a rhythm, if not a rhyme,  
against the accommodating window pane.

## **ANOTHER BIRTHDAY, BOOMER!**

Every birthday I weigh less.

I'm down to the last hole on my belt.

There's more hair in the clothes dryer  
than on the top of my head.

If I hold my sharp elbows steady  
on the table and line up my better eye  
to peek through the doughnut hole

I see the person that I've become;  
so small I can sleep on your tongue.

## MAKING MY WAY HOME

I'm in the church, sitting on an old chair.  
It's raining outside, that's why I'm in here.  
I started out at ten tonight, heading home  
stumbling down a crooked street called Honeycomb.

I'll leave when it stops raining. Then I'll go.  
I'm not going until it's safe and I say so.  
Honeycomb's a mean and dangerous street at night  
Violent muggings, stabbings, frequent gun fights.

Glass and footsteps, troubled youth, ghosts  
I hear outside. But I got Jesus as my host.  
I'm in no hurry. My home ain't going nowhere.  
Just me and Jesus talking, sitting on this old chair

## RAINY DAY SOULSONG

It's time to quiet

the ravaged past

find new words

to rile our blood.

Our eyes will bring

tomorrow to us

sharp as a diamond.

Blossoms on the trees

will swallow the rain.

The sky will open

like an umbrella

echoing in our ears.

## TRYING TO WRITE ABOUT MY CANCER

“Come back, in a few days”

William Epton

Leaves that ordinarily fall  
in bunches of bright autumn hues  
are falling to my surprise  
one grey leaf at a time for me.  
A single leaf breaks off  
at its stem to pause the season  
allowing my elbow to bend and rake  
my imagination for the color  
each leaf was before it died