

A BLAZE INGLORIOUS

No Theme 5

I don't care if I never see anything like it again

Like a moth, I was drawn to the flames,
me and everyone else, just standing on the sidewalk
staring up at what we thought was an empty
building, when there—at a window—a figure
in one of the windows, blackly silhouetted, then
poof — he was ablaze—at least I think it was a he

It was hard to tell with the body engulfed in flames.

And you know how you see something awful
and you want to look away, but you just can't?
There's nothing for it, you stay rooted to the spot
even though every fibre of your being is screaming:
Stop looking—nothing good is going to happen,
Leave now before it gets worse, but you don't, and
I didn't. At first it seemed as if they guy
was going to fall backwards into the building
but he must've made a kind of herculean effort
for all at once, he crashed out of the window
and for what seemed like the longest time.
he shot through the air like a flaming arrow.

I don't think he made a sound, maybe he
couldn't by then—that thought made me sad.
A fireman said he was dead before he hit
the ground, and they were hosing him down.
The air smelled sickly sweet, as if there had
been a campfire, not a building burning, and
certainly not a person, no - not a person.

GRAY MATTERS

No Theme 5

It's insidious

Where grey-matter drifts
the schism that develops
mind deep
stretching synaptic limbs
waving across an ever-widening
split

Trying to maintain balance, the gentle inner ear cannot
get a fix on the tinny echoes
to tip the whole
threatening

tinted miasma

There has been

No Warning

Nothing like a prelude

Or an overture

The nicks occurring regularly throughout the disordered mind are tiny...infinitesimal really...

They accrue until their number is such

they...are... linking

with vivid intensity

Bloodying the grey

Widening the chasm

Creating an

unbreachable abyss.

your leaving scars me still

(after rob mclennan and 'the girl from abbotsford')

two years one month four days
i waken, my hand on your pillow
still lonely for your warmth

your cat curls at my feet
but is still not my cat does not
purr ever — awaits your return

i continue to lose weight
food does not interest me
nothing does really –

i am holding your taste
like a verb on my tongue
afraid to swallow your tense

i wonder how long it takes
for wounds to fully heal
and if scars ever fade

perhaps they are all
that keep me here remind
me of you that i was loved

WOLF, MY WOLF

*(in memory of Farley, my wolf
2001 - 2015)*

Oh my wolf
You howl down the moon
Raising your lupine snout
Your beauty slays the night

Remember how you ran from us
Afraid at first to trust
That we would love you, never leave
Oh my wolf

We scoured the concrete jungle
And all the yards, near and far
Every time you ran - just to hear
You howl down the moon

One time we thought we'd lost you
For good, you were gone so long
Then driving through dusk saw you
Raise your lupine snout

Far out in a field, near a forest's edge
I was sure you would cut and run
But I called to you and you came to me
Your beauty slaying the night

LEAVING TO ARRIVE

She gasses the old mauve Buick
at the last self-serve on the way
out of town,
smacks at droning but harmless
bugs landing on the stalk
of her smooth white neck
and keeps shifting;
stands with one dirty bare foot
covering the other, then changes.

She watches the numbers flipping over
on the gas pump, notes the ping
announcing every gallon added,
jerks the nozzle out before it's finished.
A faint dribble of fuel scents the air,
runs down the side of the car.

Bill paid, she refreshes, "Sweetheart Pink"
lips in her rearview...
Pops the clutch, puts it in first, and
peels into the night,
the dust chasing her out to the two-lane
the only evidence she was ever there.