

Hannah Calder / FOUR POEMS

Threads

The song is a thread pulled by a mouse
just under the surface of my skin
In every direction a ripple of sound
chased by the need for morphine and a nurse

Sometimes there are words said in the back lane
impossible to decipher
just an outline for the ears to fill in
So the neck extends quietly
pokes the head from the window
then lowers it, like a bucket with a letter in it, to the voices

There is a splinter of doubt in the way
but there is never time to remove it
The land runs its rivers to the bone
a mountain elevates
deer forget the moment to take care of fleeing
and the woods of the world dream of coming to life

A conversation muffled and picking up
lines left by actors in the wings
Up town a man in a smooth suit using his words wisely
and the answer
barely audible

Milk Bones

Fallow ground receives a perfect seed
 and swallows it
The nests of swallows
 high above their own shit
 above a playground of children flashing past in hot pursuit of a tiger
One moment for a bell to ring another for the river to surge
I go home on the back of a bicycle
Part of a mathematical equation
 Part of my young mother

Mismatched jars line the windowsill of the classroom
A bean sprouts in the night
Its case splits off
 so there is something new to consider in the morning
Each day new milk to uncover
Milk and words
 Good bones and good brains.

The village is quiet most of the time
One noisy drunk passes me
I am one noisy drunk passing
 here
 where I played
 and my sister's head opened and bled

The lads are now in the army or wrapping chips or being fathers
I never saw them just pieces of their beer bottles
 pretty and green
 pretty and clear
Blackberry stains and my sister's cracked head
 yes
 but never a glass cut on any of us.

The playground still feels the surge of children
There is still glass that will cut them
I am not there
The swallows are new ones
All those from before are long dead
 and have found refuge in the ground
Their tiny bones touching the glass of miniature milk bottles

Division

My lover has a fine-toothed organ
that searches me
for signs
of surrender. There are always li(n)es in the temples
praying in grooves upon stragglers
indecision making ways

Home is always optional
Taxis are paramount
There are reasons for the search
and there are ways out

The needle
decided
keeps warm on the record
A writer records herself
backwards

It is (is it?) pleasing
to be the object explored
uncovered and gaining ground

Fingers tap a beat untie a line
that goes unnoticed in the aftermath of an exchange
A record flips itself
a knot rams against teeth
divides

Two Roads

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood
Two reeds diverge in a mellow mood
Two deeds die large in a fellow's could
Tore greed dilates in a meadow hood
Torn gourds delight in a pillow crude
Tart guards dig right in a pilchard book
Trot shards dog rites in a swiss chard look
Troll sharks doll tight in a kissing lewd
Tram parks down ties in a rising root
Tramps mark round cries in a writing rote
Temps march out loud with awaiting gloat
Time larks about to a withered goat
Tin locks arms out to a willowed boat
Twin lads darn skirts into pillowed bows
Tune rods emerge in a fellow's boot
Two roads diverge in a yellow wood

