

Like a Satellite. Like a Stranger. Like a Waltz.

Onward I whispered and I passed as a man on a bicycle passes
in a suit in the evening, I passed meticulously,
my scarf in an upswing.

On the second try I passed a little wilted like a diary
and spat out a tinker toy into the dusk.
The moon lunged back.

I came by in a heap plying them with lilies and gum
and later gently like confetti
trailing down.

I came by on my own bike pulling another smaller bike
like a child by my left hand
which was tricky.

Onward I whispered, everything is in its place: larch tree,
toll booth, satellite. My head pressed
against a lot of traveling.

I came around like a bunch of grapes but they would have none
and by the next time I was a bit slushy,
the hole in my cheek humming.

I bent my head back to see my nose was the prow of a boat
knocking a glacier. Onward, I whispered,
the night filling with fingerprints.

Where I Come From

They drink to your health how many
times you tire of counting,

to your afterglow, pilgrim, your cinders,
your infinite blinks unsalted.

One horizon an applause of poolballs;
one a little gap to mind.

The late fall fires bank into
the outreaches. It rains slogans.

It rains ducks. It's raining
strangers of the normal size.

Here's to the frogs
blistering the roadface.

A girl walks the street calling Samuel
and all the Samuels surrender.

I Abandoned My Plans. I Had No Plans.

Some men are so lazy
they should be revered as saints.

Not improved. Not working.
No lift or tilt.

Trying to put on one sock
in the morning they are one man.

A centipede of trouble.
He pretends

to be hit with a stick.
He looks at the world

as though it arrived in an airplane.
The new world's new, quickening sun

taps the stadium whose retractable roof
pulls back till a single crow comes out,

sideways, slurring over the skyline and wires.
It lays out evidence and empty space:

A woman beside you sleeping. A little clerk
hurrying past like all the capitals of Europe.

Drowsy projectionist, the sun
does nothing but ticket the leaves.

Some men are so beautiful that their insides
are lined with the skin of lions,

with the narrow skin of birds.
With no help from me,

the names of ships, with
the teeth of mice, the overdue snow.

Michael Teig 2004