

BEES

The bees grow irritated when I pull weeds.
They buzz my head.
The birds grow irritated when I bend and dig.
Sparrow wings have touched my hair.
My hair is browner and I am older.
This is not my natural color.
This was my color years ago.
Our roses are bright red and dark pink
and bloom in clusters.
I would like to bloom again.

YOLKS

Forsythia's here with its bold assertion,
a yellow like the yolks of Americana eggs
we had for breakfast delivered from his farm
where money's the problem—a wife's sister,
horses and chickens to feed, then a rat
slipping in at night to eat the eggs. He was

careful to place poison deep in the wall.
The dead rat was larger and furrier
than expected, velvety brown, a rat inviting
touch. He seemed to love the rat,
giving him credit for uniqueness.
He didn't take a photograph.

We can love what we destroy. Or is it
the other way around? How the passions
collide, although I wouldn't
call his impulse hate, more irritation, more
needing those eggs, needing to keep
the feeding and gathering rituals intact.

Killing has a host of reasons. We even joked
about murdering the obese sister who drains
the farm's kitty with her hip surgeries, her horses.
Never pays, she's had it this way thirty
years, a place to pretend she's somebody
of the horsey set. Takes what the family has

too little of, arms outstretched. Will go on
taking like the rat who had to be stopped.

Sunset at Pier 60

Wrapped in fastened belts and padlocked chains
he had to get out. His father held the microphone
blaring out the seconds. Promised
his son would beat Houdini's record .
We surrounded in a thick circle

our eyes fixed, wanting this son
to break out, but not too easily. We wanted
the struggle, the nearly-not-making it
moments before the final release.

Slender in the extreme, no longer boy, he swung
his enchained upper body furiously, dipped so close
we feared his head would split on packed
earth, swung in a circle, righted himself,
drew a gasping breath, swung again. That sigh

from us when the chains catapulted
like a waterfall over his head. More wriggling
to make his way out of the locked vest, almost
too fast as the whole thing clattered down.
He stepped away from the pile of metal.

Excited, relieved, I wished
the son could leap far away
from this grim narrative that held me fast.

His father passed the hat.

Dali Museum, the morning after

awake hiccup of a motorcycle
bird tweet symphony
confound my arm's old injury
with Dali's layered visions Gala and Christian

morphed shapes sliding over benches.

violins that melt and bend
search and find
women whose backs are turned

hope must be there somewhere

pedestrian my dream starts

can't wash the plate clean
escalates a house under construction
two stories up no stairs

then a tall structure

skeletal figures stare accusingly
from transparent floors
each one leans on a shadowy sill
cups skull in hands

I don't want to see

but I must
look into eyes that are gone

Holly Guran