

## *ELECTION*

There is panic, as if everyone  
is a parent whose baby is crawling naked  
on a icy day across an eight lane interstate.  
It doesn't matter if we peddle to work,  
or hunt wolves from low flying planes;  
it doesn't matter if we argued with our son  
when he joined the Air Force and keep  
his last letter in the Bible we disavowed,  
or if we think that God is on our side.  
The world spins, and it belongs to others  
with cell phones driving fast.  
Late from your commute, you enter  
our curtained kitchen with bread  
and brandy to stew the peaches.  
As you put the bag on the counter,  
bears swim in the open sea for an ice shelf  
that has moved four hundred miles away.

***ABOUT LYING***

Abandoning the slide on a tin hot day,  
I said, *I have a horse.*

I lied to make it true.  
A mare with spangled mane.

As I spoke, she blew into my hair  
and grazed, innocent of my love and fear  
in the green dark shade.

So I understand Superman  
and, maybe, even heaven;

in the beginning, I imagine  
God, tired of longing, said  
*I have a firmament*  
*A horse*  
*A man*

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***FREE RADICAL***

It's not the traffic, a hot river slowed  
on I-91; it's the loose dog—  
not that he's loveable with his trashcan head.  
Look, I say to the fairy,  
smudged lipstick, mascara and a wand.  
On the seat between us, a pumpkin  
with Magic Marker eyes.  
The dog scoots among stopped cars.  
There's a party atmosphere, children waving  
through passenger windows, the sky crayon blue.  
Police try to catch the dog.  
When we come to be in front, he is calm.  
It isn't the officer un-holstering  
his gun. It isn't the dog's heart blossoming  
on a stalk of blood, or the spread legs of the man,  
shot after shot, or the smile that escapes him  
as he houses his gun and waves us on.  
It's the stillness of the wand.

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(Lower case “d” not a mistake)

***OTHER SINS MORE DEADLY***

I wish to be a three-toed sloth,  
so on my head when I fall into sleep,  
a researcher might place a Petri dish  
of water (blessed by every known religion);  
to sleep with all assurance that sleeping  
is divine; to wake and show  
that through the night I'd kept the dish aligned;  
to stay ignorant of jungle news;  
mirror-eyed, bemused;  
to fecundate my silky loves sparingly,  
be slow to mate; to live  
in the world, disguised as the world,  
unnoticed as a stone, and so sprawl  
moss-like in a tree, aging inconceivably.

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## *PRAYER*

The old horse in my barn,  
not fearing lightning,  
licks his bowl clean of molasses. He and I  
are gray with trees and sky.  
In the red light  
of a holy place nearby, men in white cassocks  
lie face down,  
crucified, candlelit and alive,  
whips in their hands, loving God.  
The world cannot hold us much longer,  
virus that we are,  
crackling down the wires  
we have strung for ourselves.  
A hurricane is coming.  
Rain will become a different thing.  
The old horse sheds his winter coat.  
Unable to change the past,  
I find myself hammering for happiness,  
wishing to become unhistorical, praying  
for a transfer of equine innocence,  
thick-lipped and thoughtless as grass.