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A Borrowed Childhood Memory, Alloway, 4 July 1967

Mark Jay Brewin Jr.

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A Borrowed Childhood Memory, Alloway, 4 July 1967

Abstract

Fire and strike sevenfold. Salute and witness the grown-ups
whiskey stagger around the farmstead and backfield.
Crawl among the knee-grass, throw rotting beefsteak
tomatoes at your cousins. When hit, yell, *I'm going down ...*

Keywords

paternal, dad, games, grow, young

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March 1, 2013

A Borrowed Childhood Memory, Alloway, 4 July 1967

by Mark Jay Brewin Jr.

for my father

Fire and strike sevenfold. Salute and witness the grown-ups
whiskey stagger around the farmstead and backfield.
Crawl among the knee-grass, throw rotting beefsteak
tomatoes at your cousins. When hit, yell, *I'm going down...*

Skitter along the cow-fence, into your uncle's barn,
watch him lop off horns with crank-shears, the fresh
blunted skull-crowns, the glossy spurt, blood
beading down the heifers' flanks. When asked, stop

your ears with newspaper pages, climb barn rafters.
Play back what they said, how they said it, *Do it, boy. Go on,*
and spook the pigeons without falling, while they
pick them off, one by one, with a .22—don't slip, breathe

through your mouth so you don't smell the cat-piss.
Wait, alone, for hours—fireworks aren't something to miss.

Mark Jay Brewin Jr won the 2012 Agha Shahid Ali Poetry Prize of the University of Utah Press for his first book manuscript, *Scrap Iron*. His poems have been published or are forthcoming in *Southern Poetry Review*, *New Madrid*, *The Hollins Critic*, *Copper Nickel*, *Southern Humanities Review*, *Poet Lore*, *North American Review*, *Greensboro Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, and elsewhere. He is a graduate of the MFA program of Southern Illinois University-Carbondale.

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