
BB

Josh Kaminski

The dagwood maples shuddered in
the breath-seeing morning cool,
their leaves blood-black
and their supple trunks taut.

Sand-pipers cut a jagged calligraphy
above, their daggered voices sweet
in their ground-nests' reprieve
from the tractor's chipped dull blades.

I stood
thwocking 2-liter bottles at twenty
paces, replacing the labels with faces
I hated.

Whatever it took to put
copper pellet through vibrant eye
and pulsing brain, I didn't have.

Earlier, my father had sat,
ass in squeaky porch chair, same gun across lap,
picture of a seat stolen
from a hillbilly rollercoaster.

His mustached grin shone brighter
than the scarlet dawn-lasers that lanced
down over the house's eaves, as his one good eye
scanned for ground squirrels.

They were industrious
yogis, burrowing a secret monastery
out into the yard and deep under the porch,
like Texas hounds fleeing heat.

I remember staring at my father, thinking:
it is so odd what we find
to keep us young.

Today, he will shoot our rodent Gandhi
cleanly – flies will land
on the squirrel's whiskered nose, eking out
a residual twitch.

My father will swallow his chorus
of almos'ts, next-times, and dammit's –
poking his quarry with the gun's
crooked sight, he will become
a little smaller,
a little greyer,
a little slower.