

1975

# Jericho

Ai.

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creep from crooked side-streets  
to stoop and scavenge in the grass  
for shreds of vegetables and squashed fruit  
cast out from the closed-up stalls

## Jericho / Ai

The question mark in my belly stretches, kicks me  
and I push back the sheet, watching you undress.  
You put on the black mask and lie on your side.  
I open the small sack of peppermint sticks  
you always bring and take one out.  
I suck it as you rub my shoulders, breasts,  
then with one hand, round the hollows beneath,  
carved by seven months of pregnancy,  
stopping when your palm covers my navel.  
You groan, as I slide the peppermint across my lips.

So I'm just fifteen, but I've seen others like you,  
afraid, apologizing because they need something  
maybe nobody else does.  
You candy man, handing out the money, the sweets,  
ashamed to climb your ladder of trouble.  
Don't be. Make it to the top.  
You'll find a ram's horn there.  
Blow it seven times, yell goddamn  
and watch the miniature hells  
walking below you all fall down.

## Soul Soul Super Bowl / George Barlow (A Poem Evidently for Duane Thomas)

Evidently, Duane Thomas  
is a badass brother.  
Evidently, the brother  
was the Super Bowl . . .  
running thru/around/under/over  
Dolphins all day long . . .  
shootin hoodoo thru the middle,