

1976

Sorting the Tools

Peter Everwine

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tassled at the corners
and, in the far wall, a recess
for an orange vase with three white irises,
and a scroll stroked with ink
meant to be a bird flying
or how it feels to fly.

I've made good talk for us both
over tea while snow quietly aged
the pines outside and settled like ash
on the pond where carp
deepen the shadow.

Have you come
without my noticing
and gone again?

Were you the one
simply passing by
whose smile I mistook
and so built all this
and so must live
in the wrong hope?

Sorting the Tools / Peter Everwine

for E. C.

This is the hammer
and the nails.
I enter my brother's house
for the last time.

This is the miner's lamp,
the bit and the sack of dust.
This is the bread
that stinks of carbide.

These are the numbers
of the sleepless, rising
in the power
of their true names:

In the name of crowbar
which is 1.
In the name of broken back
which is 2.

This is the penis
that lugs and sweats like a horse.
These are hands
in their crust of dead lights.

Let the sun and moon go,
the black roof,
the seams of the earth
gathering water.

This is the animal
that grew tired and slept.
These are words
left out in the rain.

Translation of an Unwritten Spanish Poem / Steven Goldsberry

Santa Clara

Hail Mary, this is not my body,
full of grace, but another drunken
fisherman on his way home,
trying to genuflect before the
cathedral doorway, before the other
drunken fishermen.