

1990

# Trying Not to Tease Him

Christopher Davis

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## Two Poems · *Christopher Davis*

### TRYING TO FLEE A DARK BEDROOM

We could  
have death, turning on  
a see-through globe's lightbulb, our small reach  
expanding over contoured  
continents. Rubbed between fingertips, the Andes.  
The spine's gone. Then the Rockies. Nevada's desert, glowing  
red around this palm, feels  
like sun-crumpled leather. Maybe it is  
all overheating  
from the core out. This afternoon, late, the heat needed  
a private's dust-brown back  
until he squirmed, naked, boring  
down into  
the rough, dry grass, nailing  
a hunger burned by ants  
into a grave's eye.  
Failing to.

### TRYING NOT TO TEASE HIM

Walt, *were* you the last guy  
capable of loafing out his brains  
this wilting dusk,  
on this dyed-red land killing quiet minutes

tiredly noting your reflection in some shoestore's silent window,  
OPEN 24 HOURS  
JUST TO SERVE YOU like my nametag  
on the shut door?  
Several phantoms testing traction in our image

— when the last sneaker is picked, won't death divide us?  
*Every* store raped,  
not this mere chance cheek our ghost dry-humps.  
When I can find no hungry mouth to gag with fear?

I'd like to feel that, one saved life.  
I'd like to save it.  
For a change.

Is that boy dead, so pale  
in a red wig with girl's black ribbons,  
staring at my man-boned deathmask in the glass,  
his right shoulder nudging my spine?

Even my name seems a sad lie.  
The closing clerk fingering the lightswitch,  
the drag queen smiles and goes.

Perfected Mortal,  
will your Great You think death tasty?

In a few seconds  
God'll suck into his dark hole Earth's lone outline

and God's you.  
You're weak America  
I wish I didn't love, me  
in red drag thrown on to flash in your groin *wait*,  
a pale boy begging you *don't die*, Walt,  
in my kiss,  
gone like this: