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Poets With History/poets Without History

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POETS WITH HISTORY/POETS WITHOUT HISTORY

MATTHEW ROHRER

I have a secret which I will now reveal—
I believe it is possible to tell if someone is interesting
or not simply by looking into their eyes
on the train each morning it is hard for me
not to stare at each person variously sleeping
or listening to music, to see who they really are
but this is difficult to pull off
among the guarded patriots, the fearful,
everyone talks all day on their little phones
to their mothers, mama, they say,
mama, I had a bad dream
when they haven't slept,
in the rumble of big cars moving slowly
on the city streets a ghost removes his heart
and falls through the clouds
and the melting icebergs crumple

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like a prisoner shot in the side
I move through the days remarkably sinuously
and spinning inside
I wash the dishes 2 or 3 times a day
with the hot water on and on
like a dream behind the yellow gloves
from which I too cannot awaken
though my son is done with school
and holds my hand on the walk home
the feeling of falling backwards
into the bed at night fills me
each time
with sweet content
all the people rounded up in camps
have a look in their eyes
that can't reach us now