2014

Children Standing in the Mist

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Recommended Citation
Available at: https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.7438
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For several nights now you wake
and wasted bison
are crossing through your hallway. The stars
in confederate speech with the emptiness
saying if you are still sane
then you must be the long white grasses
in wind.

What does the prairie have to do
with you or the golden yield-lines
of cicadas on this desert road.

You were given three paintings done by children
in the space of a week,
each unbelievably narrates
a star splattering for its own sake.

If you are to remain sane
you think you must
become what the printer Blake
beheld on the dark landing
in yellowing windowglass—

the albian corpse of General Custer
feeding a black apple to his horse
who has been dropping green packets of manure
in your hallway mirror
these past three nights
of a measured madness
that you explain to your wife
began that early morning when you first

entered Kuwait.