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Messenger

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Messenger

Perhaps I've gone on long enough so far
but I'm a willing subject who savors
a threesome, some trinity, you say, a wind
trio culled from the local conservatory,
a triplex topped by a nest of defunct
wiring, a three-legged dog. So,
I was daring to say
when hastily I halted,
I had pulled to a three-way stop, my throat in my heart,
when a small tractor rammed me from behind
into a Harley, whose rider parachuted
through my moonroof into my
sticky glass-encrusted lap
with force to make me new.
Does that ring false?—It's false-false-true.
For truly, on an August afternoon much like today
in 1994 I arrived on Second Avenue from far-off parts
in my man-child's suit at the very moment
a bicycling messenger came upon a stopped-short taxi
and missiled through its rear windshield.
At least his head did. The rest was meat
on the hot ground and a passenger with a goring
stain in his midsection who washed the
pavement with tears and vomit.
There was no man to hold.
I stood in place beneath the flashing sun
and turned away and turned watching
and stood turning and here you find me
staring you down across the meridian
having given up all
permanence to speech.
Listener, onlooker, dim-starred crypto-pornographer, I
cannot hide from what I witnessed that day
in my throat and mind and in my hot
vestigial self.