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[Born into the Wry, Eocenic Tomfoolery of A]

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Two Poems · James Solheim

Born into the Wry, Eocene Tomfoolery of a Kemmerer, Wyoming Magician’s Family, He Managed a Third-Decade Translation in His Love of Place, Discovering in Shadow-Striped Bank Beneath the Scaling Redwoods an Inverse and Balance to the Buttes with Their Fossil Fish like Stamped-Out Souvenirs (Which in Fact Often Became Souvenirs, Giftshopped Among Taiwan Tommyhawks, Hand-Tall Gag Outhouses, Fawn-Topped Pennybanks (“I Am Just a Little ‘Dear’/ But I Can Cure Your Woe / If in This Slot / Upon My Top / You Drop Some of Your ‘Doe’”))—and So Yosemited, Miles from Home, He Learned the Life of the Purely Vertical, Mediating for Three Decades Between Park and People, Never Once Cursing the Familydad Working a Nabisco Sugarwafer Out the Top of a Car Window in the Hope of Receiving on the Glass a Venezuela of Bearslobber (Seal of the True Yellowstone (Our Friend Worked Yellowstone a Decade Too)) or the Kid Keeping a Too-Small Trout on a Stringer Made from an Old Strip of Cloth and Some Wire (But Neither Was He the Gull of Poachers), Finally Dying Slumped Bearlike into the Top of an American Garbagecan and Then Buried Earthwise (Backhoe Chopping Through Shale) in His Beloved Ranger’s Uniform, Green with the Tall Yellow Pine His Epaulet: His Final Wish Thus Bringing Oneness from His Two Loves, as if Death Had Produced His Only Child

archaic feasts, beneficences
blackballed!

America in your car
beneath the rickety, disingenuous, and
waxes of the god
the tree was dragged to the pep rally, where
effigied abstractions died in foreign jerseys,
lynching become shrieky teen expression. The next
ears and sealants
for the millionth
buttprint in (we must cover great realms
to get there, so I can’t tell you more)
the thirty-second kid
a datum
and others
(looking down past the distended belly she saw the earlier
child panicking with a chip of salt)—therefore

Baxter?
and thus the child entered school for the first time,
carrying his dear little naptime mat. Upon his
return home he discovered the great elm gone, the
fractured light into which his ball often twirled
now chainsawed and dragged cabled to the pep rally
bonfire by a large truck notable for its thick
hair of grease
It was desert there weren’t many elms
but did the little nursemaid know
great bears walked earth then
years later

and he saw it—
“that awkward aeon”
of tangerine light, of lemonade rooms
, Fred
pronounced “dreadful”

it was a basement room, or air thick with mold's coughed
aether on your collar
and the lonesome dorm room was fishy with light—
remember this phrase: “radio—that fringed anesthetic”;
that night he twirled through the static fizz to
his favorite show, last of the dramas, forgotten on
some vertigoed corner of the electromagnetic
spectrum where the top forty wouldn’t fit—and the show wasn’t there, so it meant his parents were dead and he was on this ripped island of college in the dark, the last place left in the universe, “w/” industrial nostalgia

Beetles roared
  over the dead squirrels, those heavy texts of the highway
  like mink stoles floating above drowned socialites
  “Hell,” he said—beefing it
Merrimac had it and the man’s secret decoder visor expeshally for card playing
  ruddy grooved
  and the old photos showed a big elm’s shadow across his cowboy legs, giddy Crocketting child wavering in shadowstrands, the light too gritty in him as if he knew the elm would be energy

“WILD LIFE BALLOGIST!”
  it was like they’d never heard of biology there
  in the tan neutral shale, chipping souvenirs out of rock (just right to put on decorative gold stands
  (his father always wore goggles: “a rock chip in the eye is painful, son, right painful.” Do you understand
syllogisms
  jasmine is affected by syllogisms, this is a fact
of the great apes who will roam between them
  aerosol rabbits
  flings they had had had had had bad vibes
  he stated reluctantly, stroking his small, round goatee:
that winged etymology
heretofore referred to as ‘a = a + 1’
  the will being unwrapped of a decorum

Yogi and Booboo, “yr” (yer) friends
  he had to learn the wild order, which was not
sweet or decimated—and thus he had: had learned the straying of beef, the beef of the bear’s hug, how to allow the metal intrusions of use in certain sectors, erecting barriers which could be traversed only through dedication and knowledge and proper forms seat of the intellect
(This is all very smart and sensible.) and the gun emerged ever so slowly, parting the red velveteen curtains like a liver the small man who loved scars erector sets cracked “allover” he jinked—

Cornish couples combat it names were locations—eating the map, he quickly stoked her languishing nipples—and the Men in her blood began their march red and puckered, he fell to those mumblety declensions of the bestroked, talking like Gene did if you recall, out of one side of the mouth, the other pulled slack, and soon he could say nothing, submitting to lukewarm couch baths in which she petted him like a porpoise (he had become that alien) but neither of them were unfulfilled, gross, or humiliated, bodymaintenance quickly becoming comfortable act (anything can become comfortable (and how quickly!) in love), she humming with that abstracted cheerfulness as she rinsed him (he aware of vague bears, and of someone far off stroking him (which was like hearing distant waves repeated till subliminal), he also half-thinking—or one-tenth-thinking, or one-twentieth—himself back at the park one sun-day, the gray small sculpture of a chewing gum balanced on his lip, his arm around her by the Chevy))

America in carnauba indefatigable