This Time

Robert Dana

Follow this and additional works at: http://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview
Part of the Creative Writing Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.5556
This Time

A click. A bright wink. Lightning out of a plain, grey midmorning sky, as if the day had snapped its fingers.

Then how many long seconds of silence? You realize you’re not breathing. “Jesus,” you think, “they’ve got a nuke.”

And in your mind’s eye you see it, swaying under its parachute as it floats down. Then, the click, the twinkle.

You lower the half-read newspaper to your lap, consider yellow autumn. And then a roar like no other,

as if the earth itself had split open, shuddering from its foundations. You wait for the shock wave, the storm

of window glass, the firewind, that microsecond before darkness blooms simultaneously and everywhere.

But only blessed, ordinary rain begins to fall. By lunch time, light redeems the woods, the quiet street.

Your cat, Miss Futzy, emerges from her shelter under your old desk. Washed and preened now, she sits
upright and solid as a doorstop
or one of those classic Egyptian tomb
cats you see in the museums.

A black sun in the white sky of her
back, and an evening cloud coming on.
A black moon riding her right shoulder.

The calm regard of her green eyes.