

Children Standing in the Mist

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.