

McClellan Shoots His Dogs · *Ken Poyner*

I heard them singing. Had we slept
With the window closed I'd
Have missed it. Having no time
To dress or even find at the back of the closet
My robe, I threw the covers across you
And made for the back door. Twice
Crossing the yard I stepped in animal droppings,
Stubbed my toe on one of the child's blocks.
I heard them singing. Turning the barn,
At the fence I saw all four of them,
Smallest to large, lined on the lowest rail,
Their mouths guilty with the act.

You said the siren had just gone by,
The fence the boundary nearest the noise.
I could have dreamed the most of it,
Rushed out still half asleep, put
The actual together with the imaginary
And out of such genetics come up
With occurrences rational to explain only what
There never was. I remember shivering
In the morning not quite six o'clock,
My four dogs lined on the rail, excrement
Between my toes and I trying to cover my nakedness.
And then you behind me in a housecoat.