

INSIDE WORK

Laying new pipe
for a watering trough.
Digging up the packed manure,
the locked smell leaking
from beneath each shovelful.
The posts speckled with flies,
gnawed at the bottom by generations of hogs.
The jackhammer breaks the concrete in a jagged line
across the barn floor. In the grimy dirt
under the foundation—
half of a horseshoe buried in 1910.
Sweating, leaning on the shovel, staring
into the barnyard at the pigs standing in the rain.

THE HUNTER for Bill Gilson

All afternoon we passed deer coming down
from the mountains in the backs of pickup trucks
and on the fenders of cars. There was a buck
on the car next to us at the toll booth, his head
hung over the side so one eye followed the road,
the other filled with snowflakes while we idled.
His tongue was frozen to the fender. There's
the hunter! I can tell. Slumped in the back seat.
His face like a moon in the blurred window,
watching the gray miles darken toward home;
trying to conjure that brightness again, eyes closed
in the headlights, he tries to remember the light
the deer walked in.