

Address of the Soul to the Body ·
Philip Burnham

All we've been dreaming about lately is death:
tall, cool figurines,
maybe goats copulating on porcelain,
old habits that grow out of us like forks,
and maybe it was a hand—
one you left behind at the station
in a glove, but this is no way to go on dreaming,
I want you to tell me.

Tell me fear if you know.
Tell me how your uncles felt about October,
how symbols are only omens that arrived too late,
tell me something about apples, about La Rochefoucauld,
tell us the difference between passion and desire
and tell me about the woman you watch in the park
who gives birth every day
to a train running endlessly out of her, and those
willing to travel,
and the man who tells her her suffering will be endless
until she realizes
that seven is nothing more
than the dream of an earlier number.

The champion sighs, "Carmacarle! Ah!
Is this the parade then?"
So the wars continue.
And when the old magic returns—I mean
the desire to deceive
and unwind a part of the toccata
to show just a little treasure,
I think you could tell us this place is still inhabited,
that we've got as much purpose as a city,
and from here you can almost see the girl down the block
who'd rather wash her money than the moon.