

TOM CHRISTOPHER

Everything Rising out of Ponds

I was told I should not
walk around with a loaded heart,
that I could stumble and
somebody gets it in the face.

I already know about August
the unwanted free time, trying
to make the perfect potato salad
and writing letters to you in my head.

But really, what chance do I have,
between fireflies and tree frogs
screaming “fuck me” into the night,
the constellation of a soup can
tucked in the corner of the sky,
the beautiful halo of the Mennonite
baseball diamond on the horizon.

Something three molecules thick
is biting my arm and you tell me
mosquitoes are born from water
but so are the dragonflies who eat them
so why can't the ponds just keep it to themselves?

At times I wish I were a fruit fly
intoxicated in the arms of an overripe banana.
That shamble of atoms pausing for one day
before falling apart into cogs and dust.

And I am pausing before
letting my hands clatter over you
like tin cans on asphalt.

Pausing like the moment between
when the coffee mug is dropped
and shatters over the floor and you
realize you are barefoot and
the cat is running in. Inside
my stomach there are fields of corn
blowing in the wind, no,
the fields are running marathons and then
we shudder into plate tectonics
the plasmatic explosions of dandelion blooms
drowning in the futile oceans our bodies are dumping.

And hours after the adrenal gland
falls asleep drooling, I hear
the dawn hung over and crashing
through the fields.

Your hand is on my chest
unaware of the soft Morse code
please. stop.
don't leave me. stop.
down here we are breaking in two.