

## Four Poems · *Boyd White*

### PAPER PLANES

*for Carolyn and Paul*

All afternoon you turned your heart over in your hands and rested in the shade of the largest tree. I sailed paper planes from the roof of the house, calculating distance, and remembered a friend who in a letter from another country mentioned how he feared the worst: "I worry sometimes that I'm going to get cancer or have some other tragedy to make up for what I'm feeling here daily. . . . We were sitting in a boat not listening to our coach when a huge white swan strafed us only inches from our heads. You could see its crazy, orange feet dangling. . . ." Small wonder when I rose to step back through the window, my shirt-tail snagged on a broken shingle, and for a second I hovered above the house, gathering the sky into my arms. It was then I thought to turn and look for you, to try and gaze beyond the edge of the roof, but the evening light around me was beginning to fail, and already you had abandoned the safety of the tree.

### JIM BARNETT'S PIGS

It's the same old story—love gone bad  
and imperfect timing. The sheriff's surrounded  
his farm, so he raises the halo of a lit match to his forehead  
and ambles deeper into the mines. He's heard of a boy  
who got lost and learned to live off bats and after a while  
developed a kind of radar. By the barn  
two deputies cover their mouths with handkerchiefs  
as another muddy bone that's been picked clean is pried  
from the pig sty's muck and pitched beside the others,  
the floral print of her dress, her high school ring.  
The police haven't even started to dig in the basement,  
and the sheriff's already sweating in his shoes. He's ordered