

Three Poems · *Patrick O'Leary*

WHAT WE CARRY

this shadow stuck
to the bottom of our shoes
this fossil footprint
this bruise we don't remember how we got
this missing tooth we tongue
this vivid amputated arm
this dark sum of all our blinks
this unthing
this fading echo
this forgotten dream
this memory denied
this empty center
this useful absence
this cracked bell
this windless chime
this metal pipe of music
this hollow hub
this strange attractor
this donut's hole
this storm's empty eye
this metaphor which only lives
by what it leaves out
this wound that forms the locus of our love
this thing we thought we had
this thing we do without
this more than anything
the thing we married
the thing we loved
the thing we carry.

We look at it and do not see it.

Lao Tzu