

Because words are insufficient

by Ed Higgins

“You prepare for one sorrow,/but another comes.” --Derek Walcott

The day you came to the wedding the sky was so, so brightly July.
I saw my face where I left it the last time I looked in the hall mirror.

Try shaking God until some glossy tree fruit or other falls to solid
ground. Zip on your wet suit before you jump into the river
Styx.

My new lover has burgundy hair, her fingernails cut blunt across
their tips, magenta. My last lover blonde, taller, nails chewed short,
aqua.

Sometimes my heart lacks intelligence. It falls out like a broken
tooth
filling. I know a woman who keeps her diseased heart in a jar on her
bookshelf.

Some days even Johnny Appleseed hated apples. He ate them
anyway. The tart ones especially. Some days he even felt much,
much better for it.

Saw again the near-collapsed old barn on my way to the coast,
still leaning. The ocean's jasmine scent. A dead gull on the
beach. The bird empty of bird.

My neighbor two farms up has learned to shoot gophers with a 4/
10 shotgun. Early mornings and late evenings on an overturned 5
gal. bucket. Waiting.

One false step into the mirror's clear eye you see yourself. Spring
days more complicated still. Often a humming bird at the feeder.
Eating false nectar again.

My wife let the vacuum cleaner sleep under my side of the bed.
Its chrome nose looking out. More than once it kissed my sleeping
hand wide awake.

I know a man who buys a new belt whenever he buys new pants.
He's able
to leave the belt in his new pants, never has to search for one in his
dark closet.

I am word driven. We all are actually. Caught on that mobius strip
imprecisions. We arrived by noun, verb, syntax at the heart's empty
page. Not a moment too soon.

Yellow sticky-notes on the refrigerator. Some forgotten. Failed
attempts to order my life. In May gaudy yellow tulips like moist
kisses shamelessly unhinge the day.

Geese heading North again. And lavender and white crocus
opening to bees carried on waning sunlight. Under leafless birch
trees the rains have slowed their winter drive.

