

Downtown

by Mark Waldrop

From the parking lot to the stadium
down town waiting for the crossing
light
there are a few others in jerseys but not many
we are too early for that.

Desert gravel crunching scuffle of canvas shoes
kicking granite
hop along wobble steps and I turn to see
who's off the sidewalk because nobody needs
to be off the sidewalk
down town.

Faded sweater, face lit up with all but teeth and a knit cap
in the summer time he says, "You see this, motherfucker?"
Emerging toward the side walk, road cones arc out
behind him like a comet trail.

"Motherfucker," he says, "The Beastie Boys are coming." He's
holding a crumpled flier and he points at it, dancing toward me.
"Beastie Boys and their toys, I gotta see them make some noise.
Shit. Fourty-five dollars.
I ain't got no fourty-five dollars, motherfucker."
I can't tell if he's from New York or if he just thinks he is.

And then, for some reason I say, "When they coming?"
She's pulling at my arm and he's turning a circle,
The white man is blinking and we all cross, he's
dancing a limp uneven dance, a wet tulip in the desert.

"Next month," he says. "I gotta see this, some crazy shit."

"Yeah," I say. "Crazy." And he's off the sidewalk again dancing his wet flower dance toward another corner.

