

Confessional For Police

When I saw those legs, soaked denim,
rigid in a cold, morning rain,
I thought nobody passes out that hard.

And I should know.

When I saw those legs up close:
Dr. Scholl's shoes dogcrap brown,
ruby socks poking from the Volkswagen's
dim catacomb, I knew what we had here
was a murder.

Because that black man's brains (whiter
than I remembered!) speckled vinyl
and one chunk lay like tapioca
in cherry syrup.

Man? Hell, he wasn't near eighteen.

When the cop drove his flashing unit
up (more red and white for visuals)
he was not a philosopher. But let
me tell you something: nor am I.
When that stiff's wrist alarm buzzed
off we both jumped just as high.
And laughed; we laughed the same
laugh. Heh-heh-heh—like that.

The park behind my backyard
where we two stood in sullen rain
and mud, just us two in full sniper-
view, is a long way from *your* neighborhood.

Listen, that isn't true, forgive me.
I am a little bit upset lately.

Numb toes blues: slow motion
 stomp, shoulders in the buzzard
 hunch and both of us knew
 unsaid, unseen, inside his shoe too
 they gray and pucker.

If I must continue this cliché
 of violence (*parce que je suis fou*,
 as Nijinsky answered Diaghilev)
 it should be for police
 who also drink coffee all night
 and wear their griefs on their hips,
 instead of you. Tell me, pal,
entre nous, is Saint Genet *passé*?

My statement: one muggy August eve,
 seventeen years before, I beer-bottled
 a drunk trucker's eye in Whitney Point,
 New York. *Caveat Emptor*.
 I'd do it again.

A smoldering log just crashed off
 my heart in a shower of sparks.

Ah, that is full-moon monkeyshine
 to suck toxic brainlobes up too hard
 against their pans. "Love or Die,"
 who *really* struck that axiom?
 With rigor I have lived a third
 alternative, but would now, shyly,
 welcome

change.