

JAMES GRINWIS

Mostly I Entertain Ideas and Don't Act on Them

The big church
rose over the square like a cloud
or a giant dove or a cocktail glass
filled with frozen olives.
I handed the junior class the other day
a worksheet about intimacy, friendship,
and unconditional love, as if I had any clue
on these subjects. Driving home
the usual route, I passed
the small homes, their soft lights
coming out of the windows
to splash along the yards.
They cushioned the cold, sinking afternoon,
and I believed for a moment
in the gems tucked inside each one.
How, at the bar last Saturday,
a horse trainer spoke with me
about breaking horses, how deep down
it hurt. Then an insurance salesman,
a big man who thought me odd
remarked how he believed Jenny,
the waitress, wanted to make love to me,
just by the way she set
our glasses down.
The unlocked snow
twisted down. It seemed softness
would always rule
despite the metallic sheen of things.

Stillness, and the world
consisting of remoteness only.
My head became a flood
of some kind of hunger
which stepped onto the road,
by now sheathed in ice.