

Bill Carty lives in Seattle and was a 2013-14 Poetry Fellow at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, MA. He is a former Made at Hugo House Fellow and Jack Straw Writer. His chapbook *Refugium* was published by Alice Blue Books, and his poetry has recently appeared or are forthcoming in the *Boston Review*, the *Iowa Review*, *Willow Springs*, *Conduit*, *Pleiades*, *Oversound*, *Poor Claudia*, and other journals. He teaches at Edmonds Community College and the Richard Hugo House, and he is an Associate Editor at *Poetry Northwest*.

PARABLE: JACKRABBIT BELLY

Yesterday, jackrabbit belly was not a color.

Today I hold a paint strip to the wall,

and it's true: this is the exact shade

of a rabbit's soft fur, of the sepia robe

of St. Francis, whose followers swirled like birds,

or were birds, St. Francis being one willing

to trade like for likeness. An osprey eyes

the opalescent skin of a trout. But what is

inside opalescence? These new observations—

were they smoke? A rounding error? A cloud

of moths found its way to the light.

So little of the light found its way to the wall.

RECOIL

Because there are videos
of so many shootings
the shooter has shot
is running
is flinching already
the shot recorded
the police hitherto
notified while a man
with his particular way
of appearing is able to

pass through the beat-up world
loose leather jacket
and CB radio to his ear
anyone who
exits now is pursued
by footfall and quiet
seconds after the shot
after the ambulance
leaves television crews
aspire to a broad

interpretive framework
the frame aspires
to admit and exclude
to be both
scheme and sentence
as the authorities wish
we wouldn't panic
at the margins
because the economy will
flounder they say

on a smaller scale
next time if
flounder it must
a fish reconstructs
from association
its familiar path
up the streambed
like an antique club
of factionalism
so credulous

to heredity
 we don't care
if there was a shot
 two planets colliding
was reason to stare
 at the sky
that we could thump
 on the railroad tie
and watch ants spill out
 was reason to thump

some reproductions
 are not so flawed
as the original
 would we witness
the video again
 if our constitution
wasn't numb to
 the faculty we share
with the shooter
 we have flinched

that the thieves stole
 a flowerpot
and left the masterpiece
 was reason to sing
and amidst these losses
 there were many birthdays
too much earth
 to watch all the tape
posterity is the theater
 it's Saturday night

we pirate videos
 of these videos
our eyes wide
 to each chamber
though it has its critics
 culture is how we are
enlarged as Shelley said
 by a sympathy
when the impulse is
 to recoil.