

GRASS

Sugar driver

If there was a place in her body that could
turn to ice then melt again she might have seen

the point of walking forehead-first into the restaurant whose air
conditioning charged one with the sense of a balloon-shaped planet

whistling oxygen at alarming speed The park attracted her lungs
with a movement of green shadow She laid her body

on the grass like a wrestler felled by brute force
A bird passed over her nostrils and she flinched not

liking the proximity of the arse of the creature to
her insides even if there was no imminent danger or

pollution even if she knew she was ridiculous Many moments
in her life were like this Evening was digested like

a thirty-seventh birthday as if something momentous both had and failed to happen producing benign indulgence of the sameness of

things and turgid resentment that life should not shock her with its pleasures After all someone was getting the good

bits of it this very moment every minute and why should it not be her Her own fortune spread its

digits in the weeds and soil from which a quantity of dog excrement had recently been lifted The dirt of

yesterday evanesced and everyone was comfortable with this feature of nature Overhead a helicopter rattled to the children's hospital squelching

the small victim's moans She winced at how the sun knifed the air jaggling off the silver blades As if

the machine could cross over into a parallel realm to
a mountain of abducted innocence The innocence of a mountainous

abduction where things simply moved from life to death and
one had only to be grateful for compressed file folders

of enumerable experiences which could be described as belonging to
or being of the person's own making and keeping Her

waist flinched at the moist strand of mucus issuing from
a snail's clumsy suction cup but to kill the thing

would be unjust and even embarrassing Was she so unsettled
by the real So unhinged by the expectable hingedness of

animal bodies to human life Sometimes you could not prevent
disgust Ants and worms crickets beetles slugs traipsed past sand

cement brick paths gravel bench legs to get to fresh
dander of her skin enmeshed with dog-shit palimpsest The heat

was considerable for eight PM As if the ground memorized
everything that happened above it and spent the night feeling

bad then a little better then okay again by dawn
for the whole bruising transfusion to reoccur If the child

died the parents would have to live with it She
watched the sky pitch to dusk A pall of electric

leakage hissed into the pink bowl of the parkette The
beige triangle of a man's chin approached One booted leg

went over her ribs She stared into his crotch He
sat on her laughing how it was time didn't she

realize she would be late for the newscast Was she
not feeling well Wasn't the grass cold Her kidneys could

fail from the dampness besides a couple of children were
staring imagining she was dead With both palms she pushed

the man's knees backward Her thighs crumpled toward her chest
and she rocked on the lumps of her spine until

the momentum lifted her half upright He grabbed for her
shoulders She turned on her hands and pushed off from

the grass and ran toward the intersection The square sign
in the restaurant door flipped to CLOSED The child's heart

monitor flatlined A green-masked crew of medical professionals sped their
actions liking a good challenge The parents clung to the

clipboard on which their child's allergies and contact numbers were neatly pencilled onto specific oblong blanks She hollered for the

group of thin teenaged girls in a dusty blue hatchback to open up the back door quickly but they fidgeted

with dark sunglasses and stepped on the gas The man shook his arms at the slate grey patch of sky

above him yelling I can't believe you would miss the news you of all people She ran for the newspaper

box and blocked his view of her She spun on her heels and jogged south to the next corner The

child arrested and a tube was introduced The helicopter pilot had a third smoke and spoke on his cellphone to

his girlfriend about the great sexual encounter they could have
with a prostitute if she trusted him enough The man

looked around himself in the parkette and realized the children
had left She sensed her blood congeal on its way

from heart to lungs as if she were a mixture
of yogourt and orange juice placed in a tray of

cylindrical compartments The freezer worked twice as hard as the
fridge to achieve a result four times more removed from

the natural softness of the summer evening Her steps slowed
and she felt she would fall asleep standing in the

plain undomesticated air of the street She began to meld
toward lawns as if lawns were the most solid parent

No news is good news said the husband to the
weeping mother bereft in surgery chairs One has to be

willing to wait even to pray for the news when
it comes to be good or better than one had

hoped for The girls sped around the corner and felt
their slim breasts compress against each other's upper arms and

mouths graze the pasture of each other's fragrant earlobes Do
you fear for that woman's safety the one in the

orange Kangol cap asked suddenly struck Don't worry the streets
are full of freaks said the driver her long fingernails

tapping against the steering wheel languidly crossing over as if
showing off her manicure The man shoved his hands against

his groin She scurried into the shade of a large
maple The husband placed his hands around his wife's beet-red

ears The pilot took a piss shaking his chin Why
couldn't love be simpler The child's blood turned the colour

of poplar Two doctors ordered hamburgers no mayo no onion
side of coleslaw Eat your own braccias said the nurse

I'm having fries and a jumbo Coke She squeezed her
knees into trunk bark hoisting herself onto the largest branch

ducked down breathing hard He ambled around a corner whistling
and picking his teeth The sky flickered with lost planes

and the wail of an ambulance Nobody knew how long
a night was once it started The popsicles hardened like

candy and the children unslipped two And then bed called
their mom from downstairs No fooling around Yes Mom they

said plugging their mouths with the cold treats The girlfriend
lowered her brow into the bathroom mirror and touched her

own nipples The woman's calf cramped He spotted an odd
motion This is better than maple syrup said the dead

child floating toward a cloud Why us moaned his parents
Is that you The man's pace quickened as if chasing

a lame cat She imagined herself becoming small like a
single leaf She saw the impossibility of hiding her own

uniqueness A whole life's work toward the perfect partner crashed
to the runway Both had frozen lips and tried kissing

the window Ouch Get away What the fuck do you
want from me she complained I don't want your news

nor to hear more shrill beseeching I want the frayed
swishing tapestry of flora you promised Do you hear me

Are you blind radioed the pilot Are you sleeping said
the mother Are you nuts said the man I wouldn't

hurt you for all the grass in England Begin descent
said the radio It is safe to land Everybody's in.