

Michael Collins

Mother's Day

Your boats have returned, and picnics giggle
from dock to beach like winter never happened;
rose blossoms anthem confetti across the lawn:

On one side children's sports squeal,
a volley strikes net off a corner kick,
a dad sprouts from his squat at a base hit

as the games spring everyone green,
and on my other side the water warming
(as if already anticipating swimmers?)

has silently retreated toward the depths
because (despite the fact? for no real reason?)
in the quiet, empty winter all of this new

joy again claims it's routed and banished,
when I was alone here, I thought I could hear
all that you would ever have to disclose.

Epiphany

It seemed like it would never come to pass,
but the harbor ice has finally chipped,
shuffled and refrozen itself into

a long, smooth slab of beige and black granite;
the ducks have become pigeons for winter,
their feathers paintings in pastels and creams,

and a woman praying in a snowsuit
makes the hard, abandoned beach a temple,
and the gulls are now gleeshrieking children,

these three body surfing on waves of wind –
As my eyes play at tracing the gustshapes
another throws a clam down on the dock,

scurries after it, reclaims his treasure,
again, again, again, again, forever,
a tiny child with a shiny new ball.

Michael Collins' poems have received Pushcart Prize nominations and appeared in more than 40 journals and magazines, including Grist, Kenning Journal, Pank, and Smartish Pace. His first chapbook, *How to Sing when People Cut off your Head and Leave it Floating in the Water*, won the Exact Change Press Chapbook Contest in 2014. A full-length collection, *Psalmmandala*, was published later that year. Another chapbook, *Harbor Mandala*, is forthcoming in July of 2015. Visit <http://www.notthatmichaelcollins.com/> for more.