

Kevin Casey

Pigeons in the Garden

Cutting squares of sod to carve a new garden,
the shovel overturned shards of clay pigeons --
charcoal gray and day-glow orange targets,
relics of a former owner's leisure.

My design for the corner of this field
was to cultivate a place of quiet,
but these memories of another's ruckus
keep sprouting up at each spring's tilling,

and with the lush eruption of squash blossoms,
and the pink-petaled salvos that crack
from the ranks of snap peas and pole beans,
echoing all the way back to the house.

Chesapeake and Ohio, Northbound

These towns and cities will hide their rail lines,
drown them beneath some outskirt's shore running
the length of a hundred gasping years:
chain-linked lots guard blossoming slag piles,

the back ends of boarding houses, clothes lines,
fire escapes and cinderblock shacks all
immersed in the smell of grease and waste oil,
tires smoldering just beyond the neon.

Even the edges of feed corn fields
hide half-rusted barrels heeled into the dirt
between stacks of forsaken crossties
sulking in their creosote shadows.

Clattering south of Baltimore last night,
past bricked up windows and sagging power lines,
I took with me to sleep the image
of children's faces lit by a pallet fire.

Another dawn in a different state bobs
to the surface, soaked through but breathing.
Frail light shows graffiti seeping up the sides
of idle box cars like water damage.

Kevin Casey's work is forthcoming or has appeared recently in *Paper Nautilus*, *Gulf Stream*, *Rust+Moth*, *Chiron Review*, and other publications. His chapbook "The wind considers everything" was published earlier this year by *Flutter Press*, and another is due later in 2016 from *Red Dashboard*. For more, visit andwaking.com.