
POETRY | FALL 2017

Ode on a Styrofoam Cup

By Christopher Adamson

What I saw from the hospital window
After they gave me the diagnosis.

Below:

A bed of wilted irises
Broken glass glinting on the sidewalk
Pigeons picking at breadcrumbs
A child, with a Dutch cut, in a round window
Graffiti scrawled on the side of a white cube van
A cigarette butt flicked from a passenger window.

To the east:

A brick tenement, boarded up
The Marlboro man on the billboard by the overpass
Smoke wisping skyward from a factory stack
A hooded figure on a fire escape
The clock in the derelict tower
Missing both hands.

Farther south:

Dogs running helter-skelter on a pebble beach
Insatiable roll of whitecaps
A random parade of grey
Unforgiving cloud.

Inside:

Marooned in smudged glass
The pie of a face, indistinct
Blur of arms lifting the wastebasket
A skull and crossbones
Purpled on the orderly's bicep.

Christopher Adamson is a sociologist and a fiction writer. His essay, “Existential and clinical uncertainty in the medical encounter: an idiographic account of an illness trajectory defined by inflammatory bowel disease and avascular necrosis,” was published in the *Sociology of Health and Illness* (Volume 19, March 1997). He is also the author of a novella, *The Road to Jewel Beach* (Exile Editions, 2004). His short stories appear in *Ontario Review*, *Exile Literary Quarterly* and *Hart House Review*.

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