

With Respect to Water

Brett Foster

I like to watch it pouring rain
from under the carwash awning's
relative security. It's the aura
of control that I wish to retain.

Yet sometimes when my spouse
of many years and I take a stroll amid
our neighborhood's yards and houses,
either our stubbornness or routine

makes surprising the sprinkler
dampening the sidewalk before us.
Then I try my best to think
well of this little momentousness,

attempt to resist the judgment
that renders it a rudeness, seek
to cast out the flinching of the weak,
or the hard hearted's clever silence.

I choose instead to feel those drops
as a spritz of pianissimo,
and hope that they may go
to an inner skin, still tender to elements.

I feel again the boy's little shoes
that once followed his diving
body into the family pool,
back in the days when living

was no cause for accomplishment.

I feel again the absorbent,
heavy powers of those sneakers.

Neither made nor meant

for that submersion, they regressed—
the wetness ruined the lining.

Now I see how little the day yielded.

But what was lost was even less.

Brett Foster is the author of two poetry collections, *The Garbage Eater* (Triquarterly Books/Northwestern University Press, 2011) and *Fall Run Road*, which was awarded Finishing Line Press's Open Chapbook Prize. A new collection, *Extravagant Rescues*, is forthcoming. His writing has appeared in *Boston Review*, *Hudson Review*, *IMAGE*, *Kenyon Review*, *Pleiades*, *Poetry Daily*, *Raritan*, *Shenandoah*, *Southwest Review*, and *Yale Review*. He teaches creative writing and Renaissance literature at Wheaton College.