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Highwire

Hillel Schwartz

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HIGHWIRE

first the sound of the bell
the interruption, the something out of
the blue, the ordinary; so we speak
across prairies, marriages.
is anything wrong?
there are clown firemen frantic
with their net, there is a falling
troubadour, a lion wobbling
on the highwire, unpredictable.
first the megaphone and then
parasols floating under the bigtop
seals diving through diamond rings
hello Elly hello hello.
the sword swallowers the flame eaters
magic a matter of presence
of looking the other way:
is the lord in the cannon?
is the lady in the tiger's mouth?
you could almost say
we were back to watching
the circus come down
monkeys unravelling, tent
coiled in its cage, leaving us
children in this empty field,
the sawdust, the posters:
some temporary disturbance
some way of meeting up
with the animal, something
to talk for, some sound of bells.