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## Tales of Grief and Destruction

Gary Myers

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*Gary Myers*

## Tales of Grief and Destruction

I am watching my hands closely today  
Sometimes they want to fly like birds  
North south  
It's a problem to which everyone has an answer

Put your hands in your pockets they say wash them  
Pet your dog he has come home at last  
But things are not so simple anymore  
My dog died during yesterday's hurricane  
Strangled by a scarf from a neighboring town

I sat in the corner of the room hands over my eyes  
Thinking of wheelchairs careening down rain-soaked streets  
There was a loud siren from a passer-by  
My dog was thrown from a sinking ship by a reluctant sailor  
And I could not get my hands to do what I wanted

It had been raining for days  
My dog licked my hands feverishly circled the room  
I thought about moving south or north  
I whistled an hour on the veranda  
A distant roar crept through the suburbs  
My dog was struck by a bus and died in the  
hands of a tearful passenger

Loving a killed dog involves the hands  
It can't be helped  
Folded hands like a haystack in one's lap  
All night I was thinking to the sound of crickets  
The hollow whistle of nighthawks overhead

Whenever my hands are those tame pigeons in the front yard  
I am sad  
Though I've grown used to tame pigeons  
The way I've grown used to my tired feet  
The summer swings of my weak legs running after my dog

In the distance there was a tail of smoke rising  
My dog ran into a burning house and could  
be seen dashing from room to room  
He licked the windows wildly  
I wore gloves and felt hopeful

Hands in the guise of hands appear subdued harmless  
Though capable of imaginative acts  
The men who pulled my drowned dog from the river  
wore gloves  
I watched from the road hands in my pockets  
A neighbor's scarf around my neck  
Buildings tumbled along the surface of the earth