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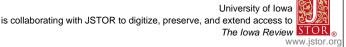
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Three Poems · Dean Young

NOT NOW THOSE LITTLE GOODBYE STORIES

Today my friend is having her heart fixed. A hole in the septum is mixing blood, the red and blue on the diagrams-gray. When I last saw her she was partially happy, knowing at last why she could only pick so many socks off the floor. And she seemed even more beautiful as the cup went to her lips, a small white cup. Around her the room seemed pulsing as if something stunning had been said and there was soon to be a soft-spoken reply. When I was little I thought the body solid as a potato. Then, grade by grade, it filled with Xs and Os, circulations and decussations intricate as a Swiss toy from another century that could be broken by dust. By now all my grade school teachers are dead and done with their lessons but, please, not now for all that. Not now for the little stories of our old neighbors who bend lower each morning for the morning paper that never explains those explosions in the night. She is young. We're all young. An intern I know sketched me the procedure, the good percentages and silver vise they use to spread the ribs. I can feel my own heart brought up into the cold air and light, a Saturday hero sprung from jail, bars bent, a toothy grin and quick to the horses. By Tuesday she'll have a canoe-shaped scar for her husband's finger to rest in on his way to her breasts.



A blue canoe setting off in sunset. Left behind, we await her return, news of fish that fly, gems big as hats, flowers that eat meat.

CHICKEN LITTLE

Yesterday the low-end guy on the steps with the new neighbor's couch huffed between upward umphs about an asteroid due in 1992 or 3 to collide with planet Earth a geyser of dust unfurling like a dropcloth between us and the sun, source of all life. Or it could just nearly miss, shred the stratosphere, the already blighted ozone-rind. Same old story: freeze or fry.

Once on Star Trek the Captain's stuck on an asteroid that's really a ball within a hollow ball, a people hermetically sealed and devoted to a computer gone ka-flooey like a cheap touch tone phone that dials 3 when you push 6 so you finally quit calling and wait to be called. Anyway Spock's only got a couple minutes to phaser or one of the quadrant's thickest populations will be caroomed through but down there Kirk's in love or McCoy's in love or maybe even Chekov's in love.