

1987

## Not Now Those Little Goodbye Stories

Dean Young

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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-floey  
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.