



Jennine Olson

Poems by Mike McCauley

Cut Flowers

This vase is the way station
Between life and a dumpster.
The stems are swollen and split.
Petals wither in the light.
Where are we?
Blooming and dying in the soil
Has none of this humiliation.
Why are we here?
Snipped
We have been murdered.
And stuck in water
Our brilliance has been stolen.
To cheer up a bedroom.

Feet of Clay

Quintessential debonair.
That amazing Mr. Astaire.

Framing sequences which would make
Dance magic happen in one take.

Ginger Rogers hesitates
Although the world venerates
The grace of Astaire —

"Fred couldn't have stayed on the floor
If he had to wear
Those goddamned high-heeled shoes I wore."

Parting the Waters

It's a bus
In a pretty big town.
There's just us.
Strangers all around.
Moving through space.
Does the same place
Wait for us?
Probably not.
Awfully hot
On this bus.
We're one side
Of the Great Nation,
And this ride
Is our celebration.

On the Way Out and How to Get There

Two voices are speaking. One is indented. The other isn't.
The two voices are not necessarily listening to each other.

Tell yourself
I am satisfied
Forget everything else
I am satisfied
Except you wanted to run
All those times. It's done.
You've run
I am satisfied
Over and over and
To yourself again.
"If not for me . . ."
See?

I am sat iss fyed.
All those times you wanted to run . . .
Now it's done. Now it's done.
Ayeyamsat. Ayeyamsat.
Sat Iss Fyed. To the core.
No more
Deep sleep
Is denied.
Satisfied.

Mike comes from Portland. He washes dishes
at Ship Inn.

