

Jacob Boyd

THE 54TH ANNUAL MANCHESTER, MI, CHICKEN BROIL

I love you as I love this village
To which I cannot get the key.

You, who will join this gristly tradition:
Your barefoot toddlers wobbling
To “Ring of Fire”—a waltzing rendition
Farted from a tuba, the clomping
Dancers in their wooden clogs
Fanning out, waving as they go.

As if a marching band at halftime
Had suddenly turned into the brick
Ranks of charcoal pits blocking the field:
Your husband will lean tenderly down,
Tongs in hand, while smoke billows
Into the limbs of granddaddy oaks.

And maybe you’ll still love me as I
Love dispersion. How quaint, anyway,

To still be here, barely touching
As we pick apart a wing.