

Rustin Larson

MEMORIAL DAY

I wake from my daytime nap not quite sure
which century this is, what body I am in,
and what I am supposed to do next.
I stare at my surroundings in a mild panic
and calculate: there is the window;
there is the bright blue sky; there is the poster
on the wall of the saint, the tree that digests
the green knight in its hollow, the dragon
that can spell words as Chaucer could spell them.
I realize I am partially crippled by some pain
in the heel; I realize I must gain
my bearings, navigate down the staircase,
make some tea, eat a nectarine, urinate,
make sure I have zipped, walk limping
down the street, skirt the sidewalk
for the best shade, note the marigolds
the Methodists plot in their decorative garden,
inhale wiffs of hickory smoke from the pulled
pork stand, calculate the direction of the big
mean dog in the distance, watch the predator
wheel his car into the parking lot so he can view
the young mothers with their babies
at the swings under the sycamores
near the railway station. I must cross the tracks
and look down at the way my arches hug
the rails, feel the sting of sunlight
on the back of my neck.
I am self-assured this is not the continuation
of some dream. I know my name,
age, and a whole catalog of facts.