

THREADS



Kenneth Pobo

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This poem is gay.
Reparation therapy
won't change it one bit.

For 50 years I've
come to the same lake. It's never
the same. Even if
only one new loon swims on
a bay, it's utterly fresh.

The robin studies worms.
The priest,
pornography.

Walt Whitman pops
out of a blue morning glory—
he stays all morning.

Blue and red china
plates— I thought winter had put
them all away. Wrong!
Here's one anemone washed
by the dripping hands of spring.

How strange to go through
life misnamed— like false mallow.
False? Nothing could be
more honest than false mallow
telling pink truths to July.

I don't trust sweet peas.
They take over, have no sense
of other's space. Just
today I saw tendrils grab
onto a rose cane. What next?

Maple leaves, go on
and fall if you must. Spiral
away! I'll pretend
each leaf is a letter sent
from a dead friend—urgent, mine.

At Haight-Asbury
I remember November roses:
how they stay still,
chill in what's gone or what's
getting ready to be gone.

Her porch light stays on
all night, a star
aching in a glass cage.

From Jerusalem
my friend sends many e-mails,
lets me in on smells
of loneliness— street markets,
olive trees, upticks of wind.

A terrier barking
at a star. And why not?
I'd do anything to get love,
distance means nothing—
In fact, I bark louder.

On our wedding day
we smelled a skunk.
Was this a warning?
A blessing?
Neither. The skunk was busy.

My lover turns me
into a sky suddenly
opened by lightning—
in quick flashes, I see him,
the first iris of the year.

Cremate me: I want
to be the last cigarette,
relished, forgotten.



Kenneth Pobo had a book of ekphrastic poems published in 2017 by Circling Rivers called *Loplop in a Red City*. Forthcoming from Clare Songbirds Publishing House is a book of his prose poems called *The Atlantis Hit Parade*. His work has appeared in: *Hawaii Review*, *Mudfish*, *Nimrod*, *Indiana Review*, *Caesura*, and elsewhere.