The Red Wheelbarrow
so much depends
upon
a red wheel
barrow
glazed with rain
water
beside the white
chickens
-William Carlos Williams
Come on or we’ll be late to class.

Oh yeah, class.

It’s a fun class. And if you don’t like it a week or two we can look into fencing lessons.

Let’s just see how dancing goes.

Let’s go.

(Both boys run out. BEN does so while adjusting his dance belt.)

END OF SCENE.

-Dan Bakken
The lake will freeze over soon, sometime in early December, turn from liquid to ice almost overnight and we’ll wake up one morning wondering when it happened. I sat here with a friend last night, at the shore with our backs to the lake, facing instead the red and orange leaves blowing off the trees towards us.

Life is more our memory of it; sitting by the lake he and I talked about truth, passion, love, things that are too simple to understand. Simple like saying, there is a fire that will never go out. Like the one he falls asleep tasting on his lips, burning inside his ribcage, turning the hard bones and soft flesh to song.

I wanted to break away from myself and watch from a distance, to look inside my body and measure the ice on that lake, the one somewhere between when we first begin and now, quicken the thaw.

Song
For Seth

There’s an easy way to get rid of it. Just take a pinch of your tights and pull it a little. Like this.

BEN
(Does so) Cool. For a second there I thought I was going to have to shave my legs. Where are my shoes?

AJ
Here, they’re called jazz shoes.

(They put on their shoes)

BEN
These are comfy. And I kinda feel like Peter Pan in them. (Sings) Wendy, Michael, John. Tinkerbell, come on.

(BEN jumps up on top of the footlockers and very enthusiastically sings.)

BEN
(still singing)
Look at me, way up high. Faster yet, I can fly. Wheeeeee!

AJ
(Mocking BEN) Is there something you want to tell me, Ben? Cuz just know I’ll still be your friend.

BEN
Oh, shut the hell up.

(They shove and push each other a little. Punching the other’s arms.)
(BEN stares at AJ blankly then reluctantly puts on the dance belt while grumbling under his breath.)

BEN

Jesus Christ!

AJ

You’ll get used to it.

BEN

I will not get used to having a string up my ass. (Pause) Why didn’t we take that fencing class instead? Sword fighting would have been cool.

AJ

I didn’t want to take that class.

BEN

Well I don’t want to take a dance class.

AJ

I’m not the one who needs the credit.

BEN

(admitting defeat)

Where are my pants?

AJ

We don’t wear pants in class.

BEN

What? You mean I gotta go out there and dance in front of girls with just a thong?

AJ

No, dumbass, we wear tights. (Holds up his tights) See?

---

Your Dog’s Poem

When you were in the hospital,
Your dog couldn’t tell the difference
Between a weekend trip to Tahiti
Or a near death experience.
Upon your arrival home
He crawled between your legs
Greeting you and
Drawing back the old routine.

You smelled sterile.
Like a jet liner?
Antiseptics?
Like lots of unknown people?

Like too many drugs
In your system that snaked
Through your body
Trying to escape, pushing their way
Up through your skin. Pulling
Your soul in through their jaws
And letting the clean,
Disinfected You erupt
From their tails.
Your dog knows everything.

But that’s preposterous
The whiteness of white men in white coats
A lack of dairy product body odor,
A flat, unnatural absence of
Dead cells clogging pores.

Enlightened creature you are,
Walking, when twice told dead.
Like the Phoenix, you’re back,
Enlightened and purified,
Once more for the roar of the fire.
Your dog, like some lesser,
More clairvoyant deity

Cuddled up by your face,
Licked and stroked your soul back into itself,
Breathing the animal
And the heated cells of life-breath
Back into your perfectly sterile body.

-Claire Willis
Touching Night

At the edge of your body's night, 
my starlit fingers emble.
I yearn to touch 
where clothing clings to skin, 
and reach beyond borders 
of fabric color.
Here where dark is courage, 
I touch your flesh.
My fingers dribble down 
your ston' ich, black paint 
where bright hues of cloth 
have melted into darkness.

-Evie Farmer

BEN
(uncomfortable)
Is there something you want to tell me, AJ?

AJ

What?

BEN
It's okay with me if you're gay. I'd just like to know.

AJ

Being a dancer and wearing a dance belt does no make me gay.

BEN

I'll still be your friend if you are.

AJ

Ben! Just put on the Goddamn belt.

BEN

Can I just not wear it?

AJ
No. No, you can't. You need to wear the belt to participate in class. You need to participate in class to get out of Phys. Ed., but need another Phys. Ed. credit to graduate, so you make it up here.

BEN

Or a fencing class.

AJ

You make it up here. And without this class, you can't graduate and get a real job. So if you don't put on this dance belt you will wind up a bum in the streets.
Okay. Okay. Let’s change.

(They begin to take items out of their bags. AJ starts changing, BEN examines his dance belt.)

What the hell is this?

AJ

It’s called a dance belt.

BEN

It’s called a thong. No way in hell am I putting this on.

AJ

This from a guy who owns every animated Disney movie?

This is weird at first but you get used to it. Trust me.

AJ

BEN

Those are classic films.

The belt is weird at first but you get used to it. Trust me.

AJ

This thing is like anal floss.

BEN

It’s no big deal once it’s on. See?

AJ

Jesus Christ, AJ, I didn’t want to see that!

Oh grow up.

After Reading Allen Ginsberg’s America

Put your queer shoulder to the wheel, brother-

Who’ll know in a half-drunk suburban wasteland of:

Migrant workers making four dollars an hour, sending three to mothers in sewer-less slums back home.

Worn men living in heat-less-three-room trailers sucking on a bottle of scotch “just for the warmth”

And rich men pouring bottle after bottle of scotch not for the warmth but for the look of the shimmering amber liquid before it burns down their throats.

Children cowering beaten and afraid under a box, hiding from drunk fathers or frustrated mothers.

65 year old construction workers sitting in Meijer’s nursing a cup of coffee at four in the morning because they can’t stand the silence of their own empty rooms

The ceaseless whine of 200 horsepower cars whizzing incessantly by.

At least one television in every home pumping entertainment eight hours a day into our minds like so much intellectual Jell-O.

Put your queer shoulder to the wheel, mine’s already glued there. And I’ll keep pushing us forward because this is what we are.

We are the “tired, to hungry, the poor” and the only way we can go is forward. I’ll put my shoulder to the wheel though no one can hear over the din.

-Peter Kuras
The Dock

—for Liss

"From where you think you'll end up to the state that you're in
Your reflection approaches and then recedes again." -Adam Duritz

There is a spot on Green Lake
where the reeds push out of the water
a thick forest of dull brown;
leafy fingers trying to find the sun.

There used to be a dock there
and on every starry night,
we would go out,
when the moon was a milky circle in the sky,
and rock back and forth on one of the boats.
We'd speak generally:
of boys and college,
and then of the vast expanse of our futures:
gaping and black,
seemingly void of constellations
and milky moons.

I go to the lake now and I
try to imagine the dock is still there.
I see the shapes of two girls, reflected,
moving away from me in waves,
conversation drifting out over the water like
ghosts
whose skins are lit by a layer of stars,
whose words move like blood through their bodies,
and I am lost in forgetting
my own, new silence,
the bloodless, wordless state of things
as they are now.

—Callie Martin

BEN

I don't know, you just are, I've known you since forever. You know what I mean.

AJ

No, I don't. Come on, let's just get changed.

BEN

Okay. Okay. Where do we change?

AJ

Right here.

BEN

What? Here in front of everyone? I thought we'd go to different rooms or something.

AJ

Look, it's no different than changing for soccer practice.

BEN

Yeah, but it's so weird here.

AJ

Why?

BEN

I don't know, it just is. That guy over there looks like he's a ……

AJ

BEN!
Lights up on a locker room of a dance building. Center stage is a row of footlockers at least waist high so the actors may change clothes behind them without being viewed by the audience. Behind the lockers is a locker room bench. Enter AJ and BEN, both are dressed in street clothes. AJ carries a dance bag and BEN a backpack. The bags are full of dance equipment.

BEN
This is so stupid.

AJ
You whined the whole car ride here. Just give it a shot. I know you'll love it once you try.

BEN
What if someone who knows me is here? They'll think I'm gay.

AJ
Jesus Christ, Ben!

BEN
Come on, name one straight dancer guy.

AJ
Me.

BEN
But you're different.

AJ
How?

Ghazal of Desperation
You always liked my lies more than anyone else's truth. So I just kept sending them; hurling them over oceans and floating them down rivers like Moses in his basket.

It is brilliant, the way some things go away forever. Others stay, turning men to cripples.

The girl who was my best friend calls the house after six years of nothing. She is so in need so in need of a hand to hold that she begins reaching through the phone for mine.

Split-pea soup on the menu of the only diner in town, stagnant and uninviting. You will eat it because your bed has been empty for ten years and no one will notice otherwise.

Orlando in February, in June, if we can afford it, in December. Mama, the world is Elsewhere

-Sarah Minnaugh
MEN DON'T DANCE

CAST

AL JOHNSON, 18, a dancer

BEN HARPER, 18, his friend

SETTING: The men's locker room of a dance building or studio.
BEN
Well at least the shirt ain't bad.

AJ
Yeah? (Pause) You gonna put on your tights?

(Big pause)

BEN
Yeah.
(The tension breaks and both sigh in relief. BEN puts on tights.)

BEN
Hey, I look pretty good. This ain't so bad.

AJ
And this is just the beginning.

BEN
Oh man!!

AJ
(whining)

Oh, shit, what now?

BEN
My leg hair is poking through my tights. That's sick.

AJ
It's no big deal.

BEN
No big deal? All those girls out there are going to see me like this. My tights look like carpeting.

---

I imagine that we sat and recognized each color being tossed up and blown into our eyes. I revisit each note that he sang under his breath until I am satisfied, nearly forgetting the ice pressing at our backs, preparing to carve its initials on our necks.

-Jaime Delp
The Haircut
for JAH

A sunset-
A vast weaving
Of red and gold fibers,
Pale pink splashes,
Orange flames,
All bleeding
Into deep indigo blue.

You were cutting a girl's hair
Down by the water,
So that the discarded strands
Could glide away like tiny skiffs
As the sun went down.
Standing behind you,
I call your name a thousand times
In my head, trace it into the sand,
Weave it into the sky.
I want you to take my hand;
Show me the colors,
Tell me how the sun goes down,
Teach me the names of stars.

Another wispy clump
Made its aching,
Slow fall-
To the very world it lived in,
Drifting on the clear surface of the lake.
I am so lost, too:
This perfect sunset, this
perfect lake,
The giddy feeling of longing
Racing through my limbs
To take the moment in my hands
Like red-hot steel
And forge something beautiful.

Beside me you are worlds away,
Slowly clipping strand after strand,
And I move further:
Floating gently on the water,
Swimming to the sun.

-Diana Richey

BEN
Okay I gave you the thong thing but now this is just too much.

AJ

BEN
No! You're not going to talk me into this one. The thong thins was pushing it but this has just
gone way too far. Don't you see? They have you dressing up like a girl and dancing like one
too. I am not going to do this. This is just like the time you want me to go hiking out on the fro-
zen lake with you.

AJ

BEN
We were in second grade.

AJ

BEN
I almost froze to death. The point is that was a stupid idea you had and I ended up regretting it
for the rest of my life.

AJ

BEN
That's not fair.

AJ

BEN
I don't care if it's not fair. I'm not going to wear tights and that's final.

AJ

OK> You know what? I don't care. Why should I care if you want to dance or not. I really
don't. I hate having you whine to me about every little thing you do, then it's my job to make
sure you do it. No. That's not the way it works. Just leave if you don't want to dance. I'm sick
of your attitude.

(A long pause of awkward silence.
Neither of them move. Both look a little ashamed.)
Her tongue found his lips crudely drawn with a cherry felt-tipped pen. She slid across the surface, stopping only to breathe; and speak to him of the benefits of tweed over denim and flesh over straw. She wrapped herself in his flannel and caressed her cheeks with his rough palms.

Chasing spiders up the tangle of woolen ropes wrapped tightly around his ankles, she rescued him from the binding twine.

As she lifted him from the stake, his denim limbs slammed against her reedy thighs; suggesting to the woman some sort of instinctual dance. Together, their feet skimmed the dirt as he taught her the waltz, the tango the fundamental box-step she had never learned.

The next morning, the farmer found a girl collapsed across the crooked trunk of a sleeping boy. He picked the broken twine out of the earth, and nudged the boy. The boy awakened, and together they hoisted the girl onto the picket, bending under the weight of her dew-soaked nightgown.

-Carrión
A woman haunts the aisles of a roadside fruit stand, stalking among the swollen ripeness of tangerines and the cool skins of pears. The stained tongues of strawberries lolled against the full orange bellies of mangoes, mounded smugly in bins.

The boys who work at the fruit stand, assessing the produce, weighing the apples like baseballs in their thick hands, are sickened by the carrion of her body. They can't believe the treacherous delicacy of her wrists, or the jerking grimace of her hips. Her bones shine out from their taut veil of skin, grieving for flesh.

Her hungry fingers rove over the gleaming globes of fruit, tasting the plush heaviness with their tips. Each plum is a rich planet, luminous and deadly. Each pomegranate glitters in her gruesome desire to push it inside, bursting and bleeding in her mouth.

-Jennifer Evans
Paramour

Someone lost a boy
in ripped salmon flannel
between the naked rows
of rented field.

He was found by a farmer
who tied him to a wooden stake
with a bit of leftover twine.

The autumn night,
a girl who thought herself a woman
left her mattress
in the peeling farmhouse
for the scoured dirt of
the Asgrow plot.
_Someplace important to be,_
she rationalized.

She clutched the shaven tips
of the brittle stalks
as she searched for the boy
remembered from a dream.

She found him
captive against a forgotten road sign
her fingers scaled his bristly legs
to the kneecap,
Pausing only to explore
the holes that patches just couldn’t cover.
They continued up the stumpy torso-
across the threadbare shirt and neck
lost in the musty folds of an old bandanna.
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They continued up the stumpy torso-
across the threadbare shirt and neck
lost in the musty folds of an old bandanna.
Her tongue found his lips cunningly drawn with a cherry felt-tipped pen. She slid across the surface, stopping only to breath; and speak to him of the benefits of tweed over denim and flesh over straw. She wrapped herself in his flannel and caressed her cheeks with his rough palms.

Chasing spiders up the tangle of woolen ropes wrapped tightly around his ankles, she rescued him from the binding twine.

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-Carrion

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-Jennifer Evans

-Rachel Ryan
MEN DON'T DANCE

CAST

AL JOHNSON, 18, a dancer
BEN HARPER, 18, his friend

SETTING: The men's locker room of a dance building or studio.
(Lights up on a locker room of a dance building. Center stage is a row of footlockers at least waist high so the actors may change clothes behind them without being viewed by the audience. Behind the lockers is a locker room bench. Enter AJ and BEN, both are dressed in street clothes. AJ carries a dance bag and BEN a backpack. The bags are full of dance equipment.)

BEN
This is so stupid.

AJ
You whined the whole car ride here. Just give it a shot. I know you'll love it once you try.

BEN
What if someone who knows me is here? They'll think I'm gay.

AJ
Jesus Christ, Ben!

BEN
Come on, name one straight dancer guy.

AJ
Me.

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But you're different.

AJ
How?

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You always liked my lies more than anyone else's truth. So I just kept sending them; hurling them over oceans and floating them down rivers like Moses in his basket.

It is brilliant, the way some things go away forever. Others stay, turning men to cripples.

The girl who was my best friend calls the house after six years of nothing. She is so in need so in need of a hand to hold that she begins reaching through the phone for mine.

Split-pea soup on the menu of the only diner in town, stagnant and uninviting. You will eat it because your bed has been empty for ten years and no one will notice otherwise.

Orlando in February, in June, if we can afford it, in December. Mama, the world is Elsewhere

-Sarah Mimnaugh
The Dock

-for Liss

"From where you think you’ll end up to the state that you’re in
Your reflection approaches and then recedes again." -Adam Duritz

There is a spot on Green Lake
where the reeds push out of the water
a thick forest of dull brown;
leafy fingers trying to find the sun.

There used to be a dock there
and on every starry night,
we would go out,
when the moon was a milky circle in the sky,
and rock back and forth on one of the boats.
We’d speak generally:
of boys and college,
and then of the vast expanse of our futures:
gaping and black,
seemingly void of constellations
and milky moons.

I go to the lake now and I
try to imagine the dock is still there.
I see the shapes of two girls, reflected,
moving away from me in waves,
conversation drifting out over the water like
ghosts
whose skins are lit by a layer of stars,
whose words move like blood through their bodies,
and I am lost in forgetting
my own, new silence,
the bloodless, wordless state of things
as they are now.

-Callie Martin

BEN
I don’t know, you just are, I’ve known you since forever. You know what I mean.

AJ
No, I don’t. Come on, let’s just get changed.

BEN
Okay. Okay. Where do we change?

AJ
Right here.

BEN
What? Here in front of everyone? I thought we’d go to different rooms or something.

AJ
Look, it’s no different than changing for soccer practice.

BEN
Yeah, but it’s so weird here.

AJ
Why?

BEN
I don’t know, it just is. That guy over there looks like he’s a……

AJ

BEN!
The Haircut
for JAH

A sunset-
A vast weaving
Of red and gold fibers,
Pale pink splashes,
Orange flames,
All bleeding
Into deep indigo blue.

You were cutting a girl's hair
Down by the water,
So that the discarded strands
Could glide away like tiny skiffs
As the sun went down.
Standing behind you,
I call your name a thousand times
In my head, trace it into the sand,
Weave it into the sky.
I want you to take my hand;
Show me the colors,
Tell me how the sun goes down,
Teach me the names of stars.

Another wispy clump
Made its aching,
Slow fall-
To the very world it lived in,
Drifting on the clear surface of the lake.
I am so lost, too:
This perfect sunset, this
perfect lake.
The giddy feeling of longing
Racing through my limbs
To take the moment in my hands
Like red-hot steel
And forge something beautiful.

Beside me you are worlds away,
Slowly clipping strand after strand,
And I move further:
Floating gently on the water,
Swimming to the sun.

-Diana Richey

BEN
Okay I gave you the thong thing but now this is just too much.

What?

AJ

BEN
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gone way too far. Don't you see? They have you dressing up like a girl and dancing like one
too. I am not going to do this. This is just like the time you want me to go hiking out on the fro-
zen lake with you.

AJ
We were in second grade.

BEN
I almost froze to death. The point is that was a stupid idea you had and I ended up regretting it
for the rest of my life.

AJ
That's not fair.

BEN
I don't care if it's not fair. I'm not going to wear tights and that's final.

AJ
OK> You know what? I don't care. Why should I care if you want to dance or not. I really
don't. I hate having you whine to me about every little thing you do, then it's my job to make
sure you do it. No. That's not the way it works. Just leave if you don't want to dance. I'm sick
of your attitude.

(A long pause of awkward silence.
Neither of them move. Both look a little ashamed.)
BEN
Well at least the shirt ain't bad.

AJ
Yeah? (Pause) You gonna put on your tights?

(Big pause)

BEN
Yeah.

(The tension breaks and both sigh in relief. BEN puts on tights.)

BEN
Hey, I look pretty good. This ain't so bad.

AJ
And this is just the beginning.

BEN
Oh man!!

AJ (whining)
Oh, shit, what now?

BEN
My leg hair is poking through my tights. That's sick.

AJ
It's no big deal.

BEN
No big deal? All those girls out there are going to see me like this. My tights look like carpeting.

I imagine that we sat and recognized each color being tossed up and blown into our eyes. I revisit each note that he sang under his breath until I am satisfied, nearly forgetting the ice pressing at our backs, preparing to carve its initials on our necks.

-Jaime Delp
BEN stares at AJ blankly then reluctantly puts on the dance belt while grumbling under his breath.

BEN

Jesus Christ!

AJ

You’ll get used to it.

BEN

I will not get used to having a string up my ass. (Pause) Why didn’t we take that fencing class instead? Sword fighting would have been cool.

AJ

I didn’t want to take that class.

BEN

Well I don’t want to take a dance class.

AJ

I’m not the one who needs the credit.

BEN (admitting defeat)

Where are my pants?

AJ

We don’t wear pants in class.

BEN

What? You mean I gotta go out there and dance in front of girls with just a thong?

AJ

No, dumbass, we wear tights. (Holds up his tights) See?

Your Dog’s Poem

When you were in the hospital,
Your dog couldn’t tell the difference
Between a weekend trip to Tahiti
Or a near death experience.
Upon your arrival home
He crawled between your legs
Greeting you and
Drawing back the old routine.

You smelled sterile.
Like a jet liner?
Antiseptics?
Like lots of unknown people?

Like too many drugs
In your system that snaked
Through your body
Trying to escape, pushing their way
Up through your skin. Pulling
Your soul in through their jaws
And letting the clean,
Disinfected You erupt
From their tails.
Your dog knows everything.

But that’s preposterous
The whiteness of white men in white coats
A lack of dairy product body odor,
A flat, unnatural absence of
Dead cells clogging pores.

Enlightened creature you are,
Walking, when twice told dead.
Like the Phoenix, you’re back,
Enlightened and purified,
Once more for the roar of the fire.
Your dog, like some lesser,
More clairvoyant deity

Cuddled up by your face,
Licked and stroked your soul back into itself,
Breathing the animal
And the heated cells of life-breath
Back into your perfectly sterile body.

-Claire Willis
Song
For Seth

The lake will freeze over soon,
sometime in early December,
turn from liquid to ice
almost overnight
and we'll wake up one morning
wondering when it happened.
I sat here with a friend last night,
at the shore with our backs to the lake,
faceing instead the red and orange leaves
blowing off the trees towards us.

Life is more our memory of it;
sitting by the lake he and I talked
about truth,
passion,
love,
things that are too simple
to understand.
Simple like saying,
there is a fire that will never go out.
Like the one he falls asleep tasting
on his lips,
burning inside
his ribcage,
turning the hard bones and soft flesh
to song.

I wanted to break away
from myself
and watch from a distance,
to look inside my body and measure the ice
on that lake,
the one somewhere between when we first begin
and now,
quicken the thaw.

AJ
There's an easy way to get rid of it. Just take a pinch of your tights
and pull it a little. Like this.

BEN
(Does so) Cool. For a second there I thought I was going to have to shave
my legs. Where are my shoes?

AJ
Here, they're called jazz shoes.

(They put on their shoes)

BEN
These are comfy. And I kinda feel like Peter Pan in them. (Sings) Wendy, Michael, John.
Tinkerbell, come on.

(BEN jumps up on top of the footlockers and very
enthusiastically sings.)

BEN
(still singing)
Look at me, way up high. Faster yet, I can fly. Wheeeeee!

AJ
(Mocking BEN)
Is there something you want to tell me, Ben?
Cuz just know I'll still be your friend.

BEN
Oh, shut the hell up.

(They shove and push each other a little.
Punching the other's arms.)
Touching Night

At the edge of your body's night,
my starlit fingers emble.
I yearn to touch
where clothing clings to skin,
and reach beyond borders
of fabric color.
Here where dark is courage,
I touch your flesh.
My fingers dribble down
your torso, black paint
where bright hues of cloth
have melted into darkness.

-Evie Farmer

BEN (uncomfortable)

Is there something you want to tell me, AJ?

AJ

What?

BEN

It's okay with me if you're gay. I'd just like to know.

AJ

Being a dancer and wearing a dance belt does no make me gay.

BEN

I'll still be your friend if you are.

AJ

Ben! Just put on the Goddamn belt.

BEN

Can I just not wear it?

AJ

No. No, you can't. You need to wear the belt to participate in class. You need to participate in class to get out of Phys. Ed., but need another Phys. Ed. credit to graduate, so you make it up here.

BEN

Or a fencing class.

AJ

You make it up here. And without this class, you can't graduate and get a real job. So if you don't put on this dance belt you will wind up a bum in the streets.
Okay. Okay. Let’s change.

(They begin to take items out of their bags. AJ starts changing, BEN examines his dance belt.)

What the hell is this?

BEN
It’s called a dance belt.

AJ
It’s called a thong. No way in hell am I putting this on.

BEN
This from a guy who owns every animated Disney movie?

AJ
Those are classic films.

BEN
The belt is weird at first but you get used to it. Trust me.

AJ
This thing is like anal floss.

BEN
It’s no big deal once it’s on. See?

AJ
Jesus Christ, AJ, I didn’t want to see that!

BEN
Oh grow up.

After Reading Allen Ginsberg’s *America*

Put your queer shoulder to the wheel, brother-

Who’ll know in a half-drunk suburban wasteland of:

Migrant workers making four dollars an hour, sending three to mothers in sewer-less slums back home.

Worn men living in heat-less-three-room trailers sucking on a bottle of scotch “just for the warmth”

And rich men pouring bottle after bottle of scotch not the for the warmth but for the look of The shimmering amber liquid before it burns down their throats.

Children cowering beaten and afraid under a box, hiding from drunk fathers or frustrated mothers.

65 year old construction workers sitting in Meijer’s nursing a cup of coffee at four in the morning because they can’t stand the silence of their own empty rooms

The ceaseless whine of 200 horsepower cars whizzing incessantly by.

At least one television in every home pumping entertainment eight hours a day into our Minds like so much intellectual Jell-O.

Put your queer shoulder to the wheel, mine’s already glued there. And I’ll keep pushing us forward because this is what we are.

We are the “tired, the hungry, the poor” and the only way we can go is forward. I’ll put my shoulder to the wheel though no one can hear over the din.

-Peter Kuras
AJ
Come on or we’ll be late to class.

BEN
Oh yeah, class.

AJ
It’s a fun class. And if you don’t like it a week or two we can look into fencing lessons.

BEN
Let’s just see how dancing goes.

AJ
Let’s go.

(Both boys run out. BEN does so while adjusting his dance belt.)

END OF SCENE.

-Dan Bakken

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The Red Wheelbarrow
so much depends
upon
a red wheel
barrow
glazed with rain
water
beside the white
chickens
-William Carlos Williams