

Gaylord Brewer

MOVING THE STONE

My mother writes of how she misses it all—
egg hunts, hidden baskets, breakfast
after sunrise meetings. These selected
from her primary scripture, *When My Boys Were Home*.
The season scatters its pagan icons—
stiff collars, lily corsages, chocolate,
three empty crosses and a sexy ham patted on the rump,
succulent friend. I haven't written about her,
more the father-son rebuttal. This morning
I sit in my own house, a state away. A woman rises

and vanishes outside, bends to an idea
of limestone gardens. With her, the dog's
a happy sphinx, raising leg when authority requires.
An acquaintance made us laugh, Where do you get your
rocks? Drive one shovel into earth's backbone.
Like miracle, or jolting prophecy. Sun knives through.
I'm betting failure, that rain will follow rain.
April's a mess of mud, aborted trails, weeds reborn.
I trample a thousand lives when I step
over the yard; by the end, my shoes are blood.

I've learned I can't save myself with the fire
of my own wounds. I've scarred my chest, gouged eyes,
scorched my tongue. I've destroyed my life to live it.
If something else now could bow me to
its brutal divinity, I would drop like a beggar.
That's no good bet, either. Like all gods,
we've gotten older, our power's in doubt. The mother's
long banished to apocrypha. We sought mercy
in the cold arms of statues. But how else might we
have worshipped a world we tried so hard to love?

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