

Break Up These Poems (the “answers”)

Dean Young

Lives of the Deep Sea Divers

I keep missing my stop so
I keep circling, waking up at the aquarium.
It's going to be hard to see you again.
I can never go back.

I've lost my overcoat.
Years later I have the same headache.
My father says I'm doing it wrong.
I've killed someone by accident,
I don't know who.
Everything smells rusted.

Voices arguing in another chamber.
Birds at seepage from a pile of rags.
I walk down an alley and someone
shouts from a window, then someone else,
then chasing.

I can't move my arm.
The new diseases turn out to be
just like the old diseases except
for what happens to the nucleotides.
Still loose teeth. Still stare.
Splinter sandwich. Buzz wing.

There's no place to wash.

When my brother died, I tried
to hold still and not rustle the cellophane.
I still couldn't fly.
Caterpillar blood is green.
God is in twigs.
I tried to get the wet rope coiled
in the long hissing grass.

John Ashbery
Grand Abacus

Perhaps this valley too leads into the head of long-ago days.
What, if not its commercial and etiolated visage, could break through the meadow wires?
It placed a chair in the meadow and then went far away.
People come to visit in summer, they do not think about the head.
Soldiers come down to see the head. The stick hides from them.
The heavens say, "Here I am, boys and girls!"
The stick tries to hide in the noise. The leaves, happy, drift over the dusty meadow.
"I'd like to see it," someone said about the head, which has stopped pretending to be a town.
Look! A ghastly change has come over it. The ears fall off—they are laughing people.
The skin is perhaps children, they say, "We children," and are vague near the sea. The eyes—
Wait! What large raindrops! The eyes—
Wait, can't you see them pattering, in the meadow, like a dog?
The eyes are all glorious! And now the river comes to sweep away the last of us.
Who knew it, at the beginning of the day?
It is best to travel like a comet, with the others, though one does not see them.
How far that bridle flashed! "Hurry up, children!" The birds fly back, they say, "We were lying,
We do not want to fly away." But it is already too late. The children have vanished.

Malena Morling
A Story

The swallows have a story
they tell no one,
not even the rats,
the rats you once saw standing
on their hind legs
at the dump
late in the dark,
the car silent.
Not even the empty shopping cart
of the wind
as it wheels through the foliage--
Everyone has a story,
like a string of invisible Christmas lights
wound into the heart.
And every story has a story
that hides inside its own labyrinth.
The past has a story
as wide and as deep as the world.
Every word has a story
and every stone.