

## Third Person

*Mark DeCarteret*

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He separates his shoulder from the pursuit of wings  
and for the first time swallows from something other than fear.

The monkey working the drawbridge has used up all his favors  
while department heads dream up project "Big Torch." Yet again.

Leaves alive only yesterday now wind-slapped to the skylight.  
Of course, he wants the secrets. And the serum. The bloody serum!

Mark DeCarteret is Mark DeCarteret.  
But on paper he's something else altogether.

The best epiphanies have been lost on the firing squad and game show host.  
No, he's the god in you and you're nothing but a squawk box, a fraud.

The window is inaccurate once again.  
Besides, who can speak through all the asterisks?

The eyes are two puppy dogs.  
The heart indistinguishable from a happy face stamp.

All of the above birds and his father's brief shadow.  
This lifetime spent preparing for the claw of grief's hammer.

More words and less wind.  
How you came about the knowledge of my leaving. This much I know.

# Cliché

*Mark DeCarteret*

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Forgive me for thinking  
I could spare you the sleight  
of hand dousing my eyes  
with the day's missed epistles  
but sleep and its progeny,  
their ghostly projections  
have never failed to resuscitate  
the coat's flash and fizzle,  
the puzzle that's my hat.  
This sentence, then again—  
a protest march of skeletons,  
a framework of tedium,  
will always be stalked by two sticks,  
their incessant talk of fire.

Maybe the sun will return me  
from its stockpile of shadows—  
a million, undistinguishable dusks  
so I might share with you  
the fringes of its stare,  
pantomiming a conversion  
but this is only a hunch,  
the suggestion of wings  
manipulated by the majesty  
of chloroform and wire.

For the only thing that concerns  
us more than the next line  
is the one after that.  
Besides, here the sun's nothing—  
an afterimage drawn in the sand  
on the road to Damascus, myself  
a sort of sidekick to a sidekick,  
having ridden you to get here,  
assured I'm being heard once  
again for the very first time.