

B O N N I E M A U R E R

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## The Poem Stands on its Head by the Window

Even so, the poem cannot reverse the order of things.  
The fruit bowl on the table spills plums,  
blue and speckled, still ready to split their skins.  
Brains still blow up at markets and blood rains the beach.  
Coins knock and jangle, clocks collide, and a buckeye,  
polished as childhood, slides from the poem's pocket  
into the rivered shag. Guns, bombs, missiles still fly in its head.  
The poem's feet flex a silent beat. Can the poem move a line  
of soldiers aimed to kill? Change a word to stop the genocide?  
The poem sighs, heaves, utters the moans and sputters  
of earth, the lost vowels groaning—hearts jettisoning  
from daily life. The poem has seen the blue marble fully lit from space.  
So, what gives, the poem asks, rearranging roots, hands and feet and blood and  
breath to accommodate a world of violence and wonder? The poem  
floats on a blue scribbled ground and ochre sky, reaches like Jacob's ladder.  
When can the poem come down, walk among the pineapple groves,  
tupelo trees, the coasts of Maine and Madagascar,  
under the mottled green leaves safe again to marvel at you and me?

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