

Pike and Cromwell

Joe Pagano, Jr.

my teeth are falling out
it is the morning of the first day
glorious revolution
Chrysanthemums in bloom
old comrades cross their arms and
spit a bit of bone to the gutter and the cobble
boys run from the market barefoot hollering
there is a bit of blood spatter still bright
in the fabric of their trousers-
harriers follow them
barking
entranced with the fresh death they carry
"I lost a girl in the looms I did."
had to be worth a shilling or two
I think but do not say- maids pound oyster shells and carry
the powder for fertilizer to
their master's roses
birds flex their wings and leave their roosts this
time the tide is going out on the Thames soon
there'll be flotsam and

black eel as thick as my pecker
abandoned and choking on the pocked mud
glory to God in the highest and on
earth peace to his people
bells ring in the steeples of burning churches

Joe Pagano Jr.'s work has appeared in *Narrative Magazine*, *StonesShoes* and *Write Launch*. He was a finalist for the Wisdom-Faulkner Novella award.