

WILLIAM OLSEN

UNDER FOOT

Casement slant of lake horizon, something's open,
some lit wind getting in to be loved the hell out of,
pushing around everything, it can't get out of the way,
weathered leaves decayed to a venous lace,
unparalyzed first step all of it is walking towards you,
tin wrappers, rapt, metallic, sun-glint litter,
cooled hieroglyphics where tires once burned street,
sidewalks sarcoma-ed by gum, a goldfinch shadow,
a chance ant, noticeable, discreet, parched for sight,
a foundered upturned fly by an unfurled moth wing
back underfoot for eye to walk on, gull to shit on,
mouth to spit on, light to lean on, eyes to hurt like heaven,
page of a phone book blown with living names,
Sunday Want Ads, manifestos tersely personal,
bottle caps rusted and tire-flattened to novas,
the child's marble cast out like an offending eye,
cigarette filters, cellophane unwrapped, past purpose,
past signification, theory, neglect, past objectification,
past the tragedy that it is a poor thing to have to say so
and that it is a poorer thing not to have to say so,
beach pocked and puddles acned by first raindrops,
meadow if you would bloom, marsh if you would sink,
prairie if you would blow away with the sod, embers
if you do not belief in love but only proofs of love,
warm sand if feet are fortunate and bare,
flat, round, fissured pebbles, their healed shadows,
computer-illiterate grubs and aphids, bee-drilled apples,
ghost apples, revenant bees, invisibles, sublimes,
absences that make the heart beat more erratically

among good eyes, cataracted eyes, closed eyes, open eyes,
all the eyes that ever looked for a place to stand
and stare out of their glare and gaze out of their stare,
water carrying sky on its back all day into the night,
a half-moon's whole light creeping across the lawns.