

Two Poems

Nick DePascal

And then the house exploded

No one says you'll not have to imagine
yourself without clothes on, just as no
one will tell us what is beautiful anymore,
and we're certainly the poorer for it. Like

half-deflated balloons we float around
the earth, touching ourselves and one
another, pressing our knees, our faces to
the dirt—looking for the one, the thing,

that flays the hurt. I squeeze myself into
the sheets, thin and nervous as a bride to
be. You paint me red, swinging your heavy
breasts, pausing only for a sip of coffee.

And then I succeed. Secede from the bed,
the room, the longing. What no one says is
that we're not alone, we never were, and
never will be. Its too late. Our orbits are too

similar, too close to measure, each of us a comet
passing too near the sun, melting, showing our
brightest side as we swing by, while white
sheets tangle and coffee cools in the cup.

And then I played hooky from the apocalypse

Wasn't it funny when the magician with
the greasy hair and a forehead gleaming
with flop sweat suddenly said "presto-
change-o" and the world was transformed

into a giant apple and we all started eating
our ways to the core? The Great-Editor-in-
the-Sky has asked for more terrifying
apocalyptic imagery in our poems—something

to rattle the cages of our ever tinier audience.
This means more death, more bodies piling
up, more smoke and fire, and similes for
smoke and fire, more flowers wilting in

a permanent nuclear sun. I raise my hand
and ask the magician to pull a rabbit from his hat,
but instead he breaks into tears and runs from
the stage. He's already guessed where this is

all going. What the next question will be. How
every thing in the world is bound to come to
the same end: some jerk in cargo shorts and sandals
whispering to his neighbor how every trick works.

