

New Years

Mikko Harvey

The well-dressed men are lingering
in the lobby, not wanting to get wet.
It is not my place to speak for the rain.
If it were, these men would follow me.
They would see how all rain is different
and tonight's is so light it is almost mist.
You can walk in it for hours without getting wet.
But that is not my place. My place is the curb
with a cigarette. And it is not your place
to speak for cigarettes. The Chinese discovered
gunpowder long before the Europeans, but rather
than bullets they launched the first
fireworks into the night sky. My cigarette dies
and the only light comes from construction
workers. Inside of a ditch they dug themselves
the men shovel gravel. They wear hardhats
with headlights so as to see with no hands.
They will work through the night, making sure
the street is mended by morning.
Then, there will be no trace of them.
In their place will be well-dressed men
with leather soles. It will be Monday
and the ground will be dry.