

## DION O'REILLY

### Peacock

Did Leif notice me in the mosh pit?  
I followed his band around Seattle  
like an orphan follows a stand-in dad.  
Prayed a wave of energy might pass  
through him, a God particle  
oscillate his bones enough to feel me.

All his punk friends hated me  
with my mullet and sellout job.  
No skin-tight glamour. No heroin pallor.  
I flossed my teeth, hoping  
a dentist would praise me.

But then, Oh victory! He took a walk with me—  
the night, full of wind, a storm  
lifting water from Lake Washington  
like it might become sky and drown us.

He wrapped me in his arms,  
drove me home on his motorcycle.  
To his bed! Then fell asleep  
without touching me.  
And so it went for many years.

There's more to the story,  
but I like best how much I craved him.  
Second best, how much I hated him  
when he took a second woman.  
I like to remember my fevered jealousy  
when he stole my peacock feathers,  
gifted them to her like a bouquet.  
How he let me smell her perfume  
on his shirts, watched me  
scream my dirtiest epithets  
as he fingered his guitar.

It was forty years ago, my anger tore  
like a firebreak against a greater flame.  
I like to think I'll never  
burn like that again. But I could.

It's never too late to believe  
a beautiful story, start a war  
to keep it true.

Dion O'Reilly's first book, *Ghost Dogs*, will be published in February 2020 by Terrapin Books. Her work appears in *Narrative*, *New Ohio Review*, the *Massachusetts Review*, *New Letters*, *Sugar House Review*, *Rattle*, *The Sun*, *Tupelo Quarterly*, and other literary journals and anthologies. Her poetry has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and been shortlisted for a variety of other prizes. Most recently her poem "Eyes Wide Sockets with No Lights" was the runner-up for the Charles Bukowski Prize for Poetry. She is a member of the Hive Poetry Collective, which produces podcasts about poetry in the Monterey Bay area of California and around the world. With her husband and a baleful parrot, she lives on a small farm in Soquel, California.

## TIM KENNEDY

*NA Grad*, 2017  
Oil on muslin panel, 16 x 20 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST