

BARBARA LAWRENCE

Mary and Ruby, 2013
Oil on canvas, 48 x 40



COURTESY: THE ARTIST

TOM CRAWFORD

Care Dog

for Bruce Clark

Unfold the membrane in his nose,
spread it out like a spattered drop cloth.
It's that big, and you'll discover
the red paint of your own wounds.
In any room where you grieve
he can smell it, that odor
we have no name for.
You have to brush the lilac bush
for your nose to know it's there.
But your dog, if he could tell you,
he'd tell you from the back room,
when it's about to bloom.
His nose pushed into your side,
you think is affection and it is—
he's taking your vital signs.
When you're a rag of loneliness,
he knows that too.
He'll grab the other end.

Tom Crawford is a teacher and poet whose work explores the natural world and our complex connection to it. He has spent years teaching in China and South Korea and the culture of East Asia is an important influence on his work. *Caging the Robin*, his latest collection, came out in January 2015. He is the recipient of a Pushcart Prize and two National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships.