

Two Poems

by [Jeffrey Burghauer](#) (September 2018)



Lycidas, Henry Fuseli, 1820

[1] Suburban Monody

I never thought: "When I get older,
I'll own a boulder."
But there's one in my backyard.
I never thought that someday I'd boast
Owning a lamppost.
By the boulder it stands guard.

A tire whose pressure seems exact,
Might, in point of fact,
Be preparing to explode.
I, though not at all presumptionless,
Never reckoned this
Information I was owed.

A surprise: They *still* abhor the Jew.
Furthermore, who knew
Pain could colonize . . . *a knee*?
It appeared supremely understood
That I never would
Have kids intentionally.

But my chest became an icy sluice,
Dearest Lycidas,
When, receiving no reply,
I forced through your bedroom's heavy lock,
And succumbed to shock
At the fact that people die.



Le Voile, William-Adolphe Bouguereau, 1898

[2] Eclogue

after William-Adolphe Bouguereau

The heat is

Broken like a droplet's skin. Fasten
The fair, fresh-uncoiled strings, each
Attempting to determine what it
Means to abide beneath unheard-of
Tensions, their untried, infinitely
Discoverable authority
On wayside sympathetic strings,
On mahogany, maple, spruce, brass,
Bone & ebony—On human skin,
And on heaven's common air. Beware:
Dermal vapors rising through the thin,
Suburbanly-laundered linen in-
To an olfactosphere busy with
Breeze-shaken buds, botryoidal moss,
Thickened vegetational floss,
Wet granite, damp tobacco, wine, and
All those soft, kindred occasions of
New heat, each singularly a-pulse,
Trailing its Nazareth lace of fruit
Shampoo & talcumey showerstuff.

In Arcadia, one's vices grow
Selfless, as they were a world ago.

Jeffrey Burghauser is an English teacher in Columbus, Ohio. He was educated at SUNY-Buffalo, the University of Leeds, and currently studies the five-string banjo with a focus on pre-WWII picking styles. A former artist-in-residence at the Arad Arts Project (Israel), his poems have previously appeared (or are forthcoming) in *Appalachian Journal*, *Lehrhaus*, *New English Review*, and *Iceview* (Iceland).

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