



Allen Forrest © 2017 All Rights Reserved

Sonnet with Electricity and Glass Doors

I watch you walk out of our house, take off
your clothes, lie on the lawn, look at the stars,
and turn into a harp. Night flows through you,
and a blue music I can't imagine
your sorrow or your rapture. Sprawled beyond
the thick glass doors, you become both ancient
and electric, vibrating in the ebb
and flow until you're wind and reed and strings
and percussion at once. The glass trembles:
an earthquake. I hear songs so far beyond
understanding I can't remember them
or forget them. A noise comes out of you
that's what the music of the spheres would be
if the spheres were rusted, warped and sacred.

Sonnet with Punk and Bumper Cars

Who is it you think about at all hours?
That scrawny bass player with dirty hair
in the post-punk band? When you're in my brass
bed you see yourself with him in the dark
bumper car arcade on its friction-free
floor with the smell of electricity,
graphite, and spun sugar still in the air.
Or maybe on a Wyoming highway,
his back on the white line, daring a car.
I'll never catch you with that hoarse, raging
ghost. You won't give me that satisfaction.
You'll never stop. You love the sweet nausea
when the dodgem shudders, and my bogus
blues can't compare with his for-real despair.

Sonnet with Two Torches and One Cliff

Are the divers off La Quebrada cliff
in Acapulco rehearsing their death?
They need to calibrate the tides to make
sure the water is deep enough. They need
to take both space and time into account.
We think death is cold, but that turbulent
sea may be almost body temperature.
You love those brave boys who risk splintering
their graceful bodies into a million
vermillion shards. Or so I imagine,
rehearsing losing you. The night diver
raises two torches in his outstretched arms,
and they are made of wax, sulfur, and lime
so their flames keep burning underwater.

Robert Thomas

Robert Thomas' most recent book, *Bridge*, is a lyrical novella published by BOA that received the PEN Center USA Literary Award for Fiction. His first book, *Door to Door*, was selected by Yusef Komunyakaa for the Poets Out Loud Prize; his second book, *Dragging the Lake*, was published by Carnegie Mellon.