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Personal Myths

Howie Good

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PERSONAL MYTHS

1

I was born at six in the evening. Rumors that the doctor wore black gloves are untrue. The rivers and lakes were full. My mother put stones in her pocket to keep from floating back up. It was November, and the click of a revolver could stop a heart.

2

I came to a fence and climbed over it and then realized I had forgotten my bag on the other side. There was nothing in the bag I actually needed. I was traveling to a faraway country, where the word for rain was more real than the rain itself.

3

A fluttery bird spoke up. It's what happens sometimes. The sky brightened, but only for an instant.

4

We were friends before we were a couple, but unreliable narrators before we were either. When I opened the door, I found a small Midwestern city, suicidal and dimly lit. I couldn't explain it, not even with complex equations. We agreed to act as if these were things that mattered.

5

Mother dying, the wind said, come home. I closed my eyes to rest them. When I looked again, gilt trimmings glittered on military uniforms in the gaslight of the Hotel Brunswick's crowded ballroom. Such people usually leave misleading clues as to their whereabouts. I kept on toward another birthday. Why the shawled whores in the doorways had limbs that had metamorphosed into wings.

6

The road just ends. I enter a house with covered mirrors, buttercups

brightening the curtains. Sometimes I wait to be rescued. Other times I remove the rope myself from around my neck

7

One had a dangerously fast heartbeat. The police knocked one down. One was mathematically eliminated – what you get, I suppose, for asking who wrote Shakespeare's plays. One tilted like a helicopter at takeoff. My dead. There have been years I haven't been able to visit you. There are days like this when that's all I do.

8

My heart has been dismissed for being drunk on duty. You yell from another part of the house that your watch has stopped. Nothing works as well anymore as the perfume of decay. Later a man returning from sleep will wave his arms to ward off marauding dogs. It's night again, I yell back, and the chance of sunshine zero

About Howie Good

Howie Good is a journalism professor at SUNY New Paltz, is the author of the full-length poetry collections *Lovesick*, *Heart with a Dirty Windshield*, and *Everything Reminds Me of Me*.