

Once, Near Woodstock, New York

Someone walking by,
an impromptu afternoon hike,
precipitated partly by
a minor spat with spouse,
heard strange sounds
coming from the large pink
house. It was as
if the air thickened with
coagulant conjuring, the sound
angels might make
when the Big Guy sits in.
The walker paused to listen
and picked up a line or two,
something about "I see
my light come shining" and
something about Mrs. Henry.

The Observer Observed

It's just a picture, a
woman in a red dress.
I drink it in
as if it were a phthisis.
I imagine I am always
looking to be stirred
because I am
so often shaken.
I write her name on
an asterisk. I
stand in the rain all
day waiting for answers.
The picture keeps mum.
Its secret is that
I am also important.

A Sleep, A Wake

Last night I slept the sleep
of the dust.
And this morning my dreams
are swept away
by a trilling draft, my daughter
singing, life, life.

We Were Told to Wait Here

"In the end, everything will be found to be true of everybody."

- Lawrence Durrell

It's midnight at the end of the
universe and the temperature
needs adjusting. The dogs
are all spayed. They look at us
with the eyes of the crucified,
the ones next to Christ.
All the calls are from our friends
at the bank. They want their
money back. We wear sunglasses
because we don't want to see
the sun. The one next to the thieves.
It's midnight at the end of a
long trip back to where we started.
The friends we had are friends, still.
They pierce us with little pins.
They line up to hear what we say to
the bank. We say, arf. We say, oof.
It's what the dogs taught us,
right before, you know, we crucified
them. It's midnight. It's the end
of something we never wanted to
start. We answer the phone with
a blowtorch. The callers shimmer
in the heat. They shine like Christ.

- Corey Mesler

Corey Mesler has two novels from Livingston Press: Talk: a Novel in Dialogue (2002) and We are Billion-Year-Old Carbon (2007). His novels received nice blurbs from Lee Smith, Robert Olen Butler, Steve Stern, Debra Spark, Suzanne Kingsbury, Frederick Barthelme, Marshall Chapman, George Singleton and John Grisham, among others. He also published 5 chapbooks in 2006, with 2 more due in 2007. My first full-length collection of poems, Some Identity Problems, is due out from Foothills Publishing, in 2007. His poem, "Sweet Annie Divine," was chosen for Garrison Keillor's The Writer's Almanac. With his wife he owns Burke's Book Store, one of the country's oldest (1875) and best independent bookstores. I can be found at www.coreymesler.com.