

About A Couple Hours

Scott F. Gandert

The pine cones rest like hand grenades
as the same couple feed the same ducks
except the large white one,
now missing in action.

And here comes Mr. Happy,
smiling against the yellow collar,
He's a happy dog, the old man says,
but I don't believe him.

The tiny stream moves with me,
looking like spilled Pellegrino,
I see Tom and Debbie ahead, they wave,
I wave back and notice Tom's blue winter hat.

Debbie's eating an Almond Joy,
Tom struggles for a tissue from his puffy coat,
a pack of Winstons falls,
covered now in the first snow.

The concrete path is marked by streams of tar,
that repair the many cracks,
their shapes resemble states where I lived,
Florida, Georgia and the south of Texas.

I hear windchimes from an A-frame I pass,
Frank is shoveling his walk,
he's an architect – every July he slow-cooks ribs for the 4th.
the whiff hangs around till fall.

A bunch of long-necked geese explode from a shallow pond,
honking and zooming too slow, dodging pines,
I shout, *I got your tickets for Miami in my car!*
Their right-sided eyes stare down on me.

Nearing the end of my routine I see Ken,
with his radio-controlled dog Rocco,
who flies by sporting a collared antenna,
Rocco's the patron saint of dogs, I tell Ken.
He nods, then presses the red button for Rocco to stop.



Photograph by: Scott F. Gandert