

New Poetry from Jacquelyn Cope: “Mission 376: Patient X,” “Prolonged Exposure Therapy,” “Doxies and Rum”



THERE'S EARTH INSIDE / *image by Amalie Flynn*

MISSION 376: PATIENT X

There's dirt in his mouth now

you

know that for sure.

There's Earth inside his bloated belly

you

know that for sure.

The worms might have eaten away his ragged skin by now
but the metal is still there.

Splayed on the satin or cotton lining
like sad coins of a wishing well.

His casket might be oak, or cherry wood

you hope it was something sleek
and aesthetically pleasing

you hope the flag was soft enough
for hands and cheeks that needed touching.

PROLONGED EXPOSURE THERAPY

Ten minutes staring at
a fountain pen stabbing,
scribbling paper.

A rocket hit a concrete wall
I told her.

Water spots on bifocal glasses
blurring iris's, flickering like
burnt out pixels on a screen.

A desk placard bolded
with professional credentials
hooraying the study of mental illness.

A rocket hit a concrete wall and

Tic-tacs shaking in my red purse
snapping the container at its neck
revealing the candied-mint nonsense
delaying my esophagus to stretch
in the direction of answer.

A rocket hit a C-130 fuel tank spraying
shrapnel

Her voice dives
down into the depths
of her vocal cords
pulling out
forced tonal sympathy
an octave of care.

*If
you'd like, I can prescribe you Zoloft today.*

The rocket hit a concrete wall
the metal
a rocket
hit
the fuel tank
a concrete
w
a
l
l

DOXIES AND RUM

My Dachshund

watches me pour

my

third

Coke.

bowed legs sit

under

his robust

chest.

beaming

in judgment

Morgan's

leg
swung firmly

a barrel

he winks, opens his mouth

howls a whistling screech

rum and

firmly

chocolate colored

not

but acceptance.

Captain

resting on

and

His

Eyes

a
rocket's screech.

A
hand over his mouth

him. I quiet

Pouring
the rest in the empty glass

the
ice breaks up

dissolving
into
themselves.

Spice,
sugar, caramel,
washes away the
dryness in my throat

and
salt from the sinuses stuck there.

Salt that I refuse
to expel
any
natural way.

My Doxie jumps on
my lap

smelling
distinctly of corn chips

for
no reason at all.

He rests his head
in the crevice

of my arm

sighing deeper

than

I thought he could.