

# 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

ice breaks up the

into dissolving  
themselves.

sugar, caramel, Spice,

washes away the  
dryness in my throat

and  
salt from the sinuses stuck there.

Salt that I refuse

any to expel  
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.