

i can barely see over the seat
turning my head
at the shrieking ladies
turning my head at the other car
seeing something in the shadow
of the car as it moved like bedtime
across the sidewalk and into the street,
seeing in the shadow
a face that was my own
fiercely smiling,
smiling through the crash of metal
and the shattering of glass
like a thousand bells,
seeing in the shadow
a face that was my own
smiling fiercely
even through the spanking and
through all the hysterical nights
we spent at my grandmother's house
waiting for her to die
until the smile itself
became a point of entry
for all the terrors
that followed.

-- marcus j. grapes

New Orleans LA & Los Angeles CA

the great railsplitter

taoist toddler

once
when i was
making love
to her
i
thought of myself
as abe lincoln
and
that's as close
as this
mad
merry
mexican
motherfucker
will ever
come
to being
president

my daughter
dragging
her toy
that makes
plinkety
plink
plunk
sounds
as the evening wind
a weary traveller home
from mt. fuji
folds the curtains
of my bedroom window
in rhythmic patterns
swaying
to the song of
ancient wind chimes
played by
happy buddha
in diapers

-- leroy quintana

Las Cruces NM