

## Nic Reiner

### *A Disagreement*

One day during the morning rounds  
Terrify and Horrify got to arguing.  
“We’re doing the same thing,” said Horrify.  
“I want to be different,” Terrify insisted.  
“No,” said Horrify,  
who was a good older brother.

Early on, they were cool.  
They morphed into  
adjectives side by side. Terrible and Horrible.  
Terrify loved the attention he  
got when things went wrong. Things  
usually went wrong.

Horrify looked out for Terrify,  
knew he was reckless. Knew he  
couldn’t always control the fear  
he whipped up.

They grew and grew.  
They hung out with the other fys. Electrify  
had good stories, spent some time  
with college basketball announcers who  
used her to describe players  
who had mad hops and crazy dunks.

They drank with Stupefy.

She had an interesting life. A verbal  
stun gun, she grew accustomed  
to drawing blank stares and incredulous  
looks. Calcify was pretty boring,  
one-dimensional, really, inflexible.

Liquefy was the most beautiful.  
At least that’s what they thought.  
They both wanted her  
to touch them and make them weak,  
which she did.

Aren’t I terrific, O Melter?  
Terrific?

Terrific. Divergence.  
And like that,  
it was his way out.

Horrify was shocked.  
He was broken.  
“I am Horrific. We are no longer brothers.”

And Terrify was fine with that.  
He was eager to veer.  
To be responsible for something other than fear.

*Anti-Pastoral*

When the bus ran you over, I thought  
nothing of the days we spent together. Not  
the times at the beach or any of that. I thought  
of what I had for breakfast that morning.  
Bacon and eggs, sunny side up. I thought  
of rolling around on the ground  
in laughter for no good reason, as if I thought  
it was all very funny. Which I did.

It's not raining today and I don't like  
the blood. But the smell of blood  
reminds me of the smell of semen,  
which reminds me of you.  
Behind the bus is a row of hills  
that don't remind me of you.  
They look green and yellow and I wonder  
how old they are. I love that phrase "old as the hills."  
Humans are nothing compared to hills.  
I don't really know where I'll bury you. But I want  
it to be on a hill. Green Hills Mortuary. There it is.

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Nic Reiner is an avid college basketball fan from Southern California who likes to write about violence. A fan of wordplay and internal rhyme, he never learned how to type correctly and so prefers to write by hand.