

Two Poems

Barry Schwabsky

Licking River

I lick the pollen from the nooks and crannies of your voice
it had settled there in anticipation

the wind shifts direction like a verse
you once impressed on my lips

before I touched them to the mirror
and looked to find your secret name there
a woman who broke her eyes by crying

niche empath cutie
and all the stars barricaded inside your skull

looking with the third eye
all signs point to yes

nothing matters more to me than this
come to me, come into my army

Broken-Wing Display

(In memory of Sean Bonney)

The sun on its way out of there
horizon forced to give up its secret
the last word on the majesty of the sexes

—and your most recent bird
the black seed from which a whole sky is born
whose words are our most remote ancestors
their syllables collapse into heaps of silence

a dozen pockets where you never find your keys
echoes multiply in the locked box where you store them
like a heart filled with laughter
your broken teeth tore to pieces

