

Arkansas Poem

Andrew Cox

The teenager with pink hair
And a pierced nose
Leading with her face
Is the Arkansas poem
Wearing bad makeup
And hoping no one
Will call its bluff

Here where the lost
Don't have to beg
The mothers tiptoe to work
The fathers make no excuses
And the tired little houses
With their porch lights
Wait for the Arkansas poem
To come home

Make no mistake
The girls playing house
In the backyard have no idea
They will one day return
To kill off
Who they once were
And with the act
Set free the Arkansas poem

These boys levitating the streets
Looking for a place to land
Like a flock of sad birds
Don't know why
The swing sets and slides
The sandboxes and their shovels
Are sinking into the ground
With the Arkansas poem

A man wakes up
In a hospital room
Hooked to a machine
Called the Arkansas poem

The Arkansas poem has made
Birds fall from the sky
Fish float in the river
Toads come down with the rain
And we can no longer control
The Arkansas poem
As it covers everything

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