

Tabasco the Bull

Everything was going so good

For you and me that night—

You had on that gingham dress you sewed yourself

burnished

And I was in my new leather jacket—

Until Bill Hartman's bull

(Called Tabasco after the sauce)

electrician

Busted out of his pen.

Bill used to ask, finger in his mustache,

"What's a man to do

fault

With a thing like that?

Electricians have no need for unruly beasts.

Ours is a world of wires

gingham

And burnished copper plates.

Who cares if it was her old man's?

Remembrances should be like oranges at Christmas—

mustache

Fragrant and ordinary—

That you savor, each time they come around."

But she'd tell him it was like a scab,

orange

Just part of the healing process,

And he's got no right to pick at it—

It being hers, after all.

scab

Besides, was she skeptical

About his mother's bracelet

Always tucked inside his shirt pocket,

Nearby like an infant's binky?

skeptical

That shut him up,

Until the night we went out walking.

tabasco

Well, when I saw that bull coming,

With his head down and flared-out nostrils,

I took off running,

Because I figured you would too.

unruly

Only later did I see we'd been parted.

Whose fault is it, then,

We never made anything happen?

Ben Jacobs

Broadside

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