

Jim Zola – Two Poems

Ashes

The Carter brothers were pit-bull mean.
We crossed the street to pass their house.

Knowing nothing about the mysteries
of faith, I believed what I was told.

So when the Carters appeared with black
smudged foreheads and grim tales of sin,

what could I do? This from boys who would
bloody a nose for a wrong look. Sin

could eat away God's protection
until all was ash. I looked

in the mirror after every falter.
Long after the Carters moved out,

after I learned the reasons behind
their meanness, I still crossed the street

to pass their house.

To See You Naked is to Remember the Earth

we are creatures
of certainty

the aberration
of stars

a recipe for loss
the hymn of our flesh

we cover our tracks
in the snow

the only way
out of the forest

Jim Zola has worked in a warehouse, as a security guard, in a bookstore, as a teacher for Deaf children, as a toy designer for Fisher Price, and currently as a children's librarian. Published in many journals through the years, his publications include a chapbook -- *The One Hundred Bones of Weather* (Blue Pitcher Press) -- and a full length poetry collection -- *What Glorious Possibilities* (Aldrich Press). He lives in Greensboro, NC.