



## Journal Entry: 186,000 Miles Per Second

Running late again, I meant to be  
elsewhere an hour ago, a lifetime ago.  
I'm prone to exaggeration. I rush around,  
misplace my keys, forget my wallet,  
lock the door, then remember the one thing  
I need most. I need the curtains over  
The kitchen window to gap and let in  
a sliver of morning. I need moonlight  
in my bedroom to check my breathing,  
to put its hand on my forehead, feel  
for fever. I need the amber illumination  
of streetlights to make me reconsider  
what I've left undone. The world is a clock  
running backwards. No wonder  
I'm always speeding through town,  
swerving in and out of traffic, an asteroid  
careening through the solar system.  
This is the fate of heavenly bodies,  
a matter of constant motion, always  
in a hurry, a tizzy, going full tilt  
among the stars. I have no heavenly  
traits. I've heard water drains counter-  
clockwise in the southern hemisphere,  
but my friends balk at the thought,  
as though I made it up, as though I were  
trying to bend light with my bare hands.  
And I want to tell them, in a way, I can.  
So can they. But no one thinks in terms  
of photons, which have energy,  
but no mass. If only I could move that fast,  
I could be everywhere, omnipresent, except  
in those places where whippoorwills sing.  
For this, I will close my eyes. For this  
I can count the hours as if they were stars.

## Superhuman Kisses

I could kiss you upside down,  
    you standing in an alley at night,  
the only light sneaking around  
    corners of abandoned buildings,  
me hanging from a fire escape,  
    my feet lost somewhere  
near the stars of Arachne.

Or I might take you  
into my arms and leap into the sky,  
    fly above the city, tenements  
and offices, warehouses and skyscrapers,  
    our lips fighting the pull of gravity,  
our bodies flung free  
    from land and sea,  
the universe ours for the taking.

How I would love to kiss you underwater,  
    swim with you into the depths of the ocean,  
surrounded by all those peculiar creatures,  
    my mouth against yours,  
giving you breath,  
    our eyes adjusted to darkness  
as though we could survive forever  
    watching the heart of the earth  
flow from fissures and fractures.

I could pull you close like a magnet,  
our kiss a relentless attraction  
    beyond our control.

I could use electricity, a spark of desire,  
    our lips tingling with excitement,  
our bodies coursing with a power  
    we never knew we could hold.

I could even move faster than the speed of light,  
    my kiss no more than a breeze as I pass,  
touch your lips as though a ghost has visited  
    with a wistful affection.  
As though I'd made a promise to return.

**David B. Prather** is the author of *We Were Birds* published by Main Street Rag Publishing. His work has appeared in several print and online journals, including *Prairie Schooner*, *Colorado Review*, *Poet Lore*, *The Literary Review*, *Grey Sparrow Journal*, *ucity review*, *Sheila-Na-Gig*, *Psaltery & Lyre*, *Seneca Review*, and several others. He studied acting at The National Shakespeare Conservatory in New York, and he studied writing at Warren Wilson College in North Carolina. He currently lives in Parkersburg, WV.