

Steve Klepetar

Asylum

*In the burned house I am eating breakfast.
You understand: there is no house, there is no
breakfast,
yet here I am.*

Margaret Atwood

We liked to climb the barren rocks,
enjoyed the wind and rain.

Oh, we caused trouble sometimes,
when we kicked our muddy boots

against the barn or drank our stolen
whiskey at the chapel in the woods.

We meant no harm.
The fire was one thing,

the wind another.
All night we watched the forest burn.

We hid beside the stream,
followed its flow to the river,

then the lake on the other side of town.
Everywhere smoke and ash and flame.

We found a fishing boat and rowed
until our arms were numb.

I was glad to see the morning,
a penitent in rags clawing at cathedral gates.

Steve Klepetar lives in the Berkshires in Massachusetts. His work has appeared widely in the U.S. and abroad, and has received several nominations for the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net. He is the author of fourteen poetry collections, including *Family Reunion*, *The Li Bo Poems*, and *My Son Writes a Report on the Warsaw Ghetto*.