

Tim Suermond – Three Poems

Johnson & Vine

A man stood on the corner every day
for around two weeks, a man
you'd know a hard life had taken over,
a man difficult to talk with, although
you could give him coins or a bill—
what else did you have to give?
Sometimes he would sing, and not as badly
as you might expect. I remember hearing
“when the bluebirds return to Sorrento”—
I could never verify if the lyric
came from an actual song, but I loved it.
One day he wasn't there and he hasn't been
back for months. I'd like to think
he wound up in Sorrento, in an apartment
with a balcony high enough to see for miles.
I'd like to think I'd wind up in Sorrento—
but the world will probably disappoint us both,
no matter how much you and I beg it
to intrude on our behalf, bluebirds in tow.

While My Wife Cuts My Hair

I close my eyes and am elected President,
a young one at that. I wave from the open
limousine and the crowds wave and cheer me on.
How the world will change for the better now.
I hear “finished” and open my eyes. “Go look
in the mirror” my wife says. “You could be President.”

The World We Don't Know

“May I take a small suitcase?”
I say to no one.
“Take two small suitcases”
a voice says.
Kindness already—
perhaps I have been wrong
about everything.

Tim Suermondt's sixth full-length book of poems *A Doughnut And The Great Beauty Of The World* is forthcoming from MadHat Press in 2021. His current collection *Josephine Baker Swimming Pool* is also from MadHat. He has published in *Poetry*, *Ploughshares*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The Georgia Review*, *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Stand Magazine*, *december magazine*, *Muddy River Poetry Review*, *On the Seawall*, *Poet Lore and Plume*, among many others. He lives in Cambridge (MA) with his wife, the poet Pui Ying Wong.