

From *Adirondack Review*

Balloon

Rainbow-striped above the neighborhood
swoops a hot air balloon.
The shadow rakes the rooftop,
marks my brother's face and mine
as we thatch the September lawn.
He drops a tool to earth
as if the siren called
and speed will save a man's life.

I shoot ahead before
a rule might hold my legs home.
Eyes and wrists to the sky,
I sight them in the cabin,
the short one half way to the tall one's shoulder,
an orange jet flaming
above their heads. I can
almost register a photograph
on the silver plate of my mind.
The tall one crouches,
head nestled to his companion.
He points us out.

Maybe our high-pitched cries
can touch their ears.
We chase like crazed terrestrial birds,
flight envy and evolution forgotten,
unmoored from maps, beyond
our precinct of safety
into foreign streets where dogs
smell our unease, where
flat-faced boys gun motor bikes
and shoot heat and razored
grass from vibrating mowers.
But we pass through
and arrive at the landing
to see whose faces they have.
I see him and it is true.
I am no longer
the small size of a boy.