

Grasshopper Invasion

(Kansas, 1874)

The farmer spied the cloud and left his plow.
The farmwife swept her children all indoors
and once inside, she lit the lamp and wept
as hoppers rattled on the kitchen screen.
A few intruders crept inside the house
to rip the curtains full of ugly holes.

Grasshoppers stripped each field of corn and wheat,
devoured the garden, every leaf and bush;
and gnawed the paint from house, from barn and shed.
The children hid beneath a counterpane.
Their father viewed his fields and turned away.

Nova Trimble Ashley

The Actor

My father, born to be an actor,
had grease paint in his bones.
But with a mountain of unpaid bills,
(it was no joke to be broke)
he took up preaching,
acted out the lives of Job and Jonah,
continued to be poor.

Nova Trimble Ashley