

MARK JAY BREWIN, JR.

The Coming Apart

So much said to me of how
they were let loose on the Ford Fairlane
how he was tossed the keys and his older brother my uncle
lugged over the whole of their grandfather's tool chest
in a wheelbarrow for them to pick over and tear to hell
the engine bay and all its tickings stripped down
to metal and gasket all on a whim for no reason at all
or maybe the old man witnessed that hint of distance
and grudge between brothers even then no hope
hands fumbled and dismembered air cleaner from carburetor
distributor coils from the block as if they tried to understand
how each bit worked or just loved the coming apart
and when every stitch of upholstery was split
the faceplates and knobs off without a scratch
a whisper what if there was the trace of hope my father
finally happy to have traded Allen wrenches and drivers
without bruised knuckles without fingers dug under collarbones
to drag him around the den finally almost there
at the heart of it looking to drop the dismantled motor
when the old man called them off worried about
crushed toes the car nearly down to its framework
but there was his brother my uncle turning away from it
staring at the Phillips in his hand hauling the tools
back to the shop and the young one my father left
palming the keys to something that wouldn't go anywhere.