

Fall 2012

A Form for Dave

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A FORM FOR DAVE

1.

Do you remember the song
it was two lines

I made

I'd sing it in our back-porch-swing
after a visit with Dave

Oh, and by the way
So-o-o are you happy?

2.

Dave has time this week, is going to feel
the glow of God and Heaven
like a red raccoon, eyes white from the sun

He rode his bike all day (hunting again),
has to sow grass now the weeds are dead.

3.

Dave took the feeders down next door.
Mowing and blowing for days,
Dave looks tired, a bit gaunt.

People stare at his flowerboxes
want more for their houses

Dave takes his time alone.

4.

Smoking made Dave's lungs hurt
sanding plaster and such
Dave's cutting back on coffee.

5.

Dave wakes up in the night says, "This sucks" and
"I'm thirsty" and "No muscles in my belly."

6.

Dave resigned, built a sunroom in four days,
blew the leaves across three lawns.

Dave's bored out of his mind.
He asks when you're coming.

7.

Rained and Dave patched the roof.
Pretending to want more info, Dave asks
why you stomp through the house.

He's wearing the patch again,
goes to surgery when the roof caves
for pain and a busted gut.

8.

Dave's cutting back on coffee,
takes his time alone, tries not to make it perfect.

Dave knows how: he drives,
mows, and the pain goes.

He builds houses for cats to climb in,
drinks slow so you'll stay in the room.

9.

Dave killed the weeds, so dead patches all over.
Won't get a job now till he's healed.

He goes to hug you once you're gone,
takes all the feeders down. Calls them back too late.

Dave's growing Kentucky blue grass. He won't let the dogs go in his yard so brings them here instead. I said Dave I don't want your dogshit here, but he pretends he can't hear and marks it with a stick and leaves it. He slams the door open and brings the dogs in and says Moot, look at Two-Pup. Those dumb pugs can't make it through the door without tripping each other, but he keeps them on a split leash just the same. They like to be together, Dave says. He can tell I'm disgusted when he says it, so he pops his lips and says Bye Moot and slams the door again.

I watched the baby last week. He's crawling now, so I cleared out the bottom drawers in the kitchen. I left him some plastic things to find, my old measuring cups and such. I don't bake anymore, so it's all right if he beats on them. I pretend to work on my crossword and rock in my chair like I don't know what he's thinking when he looks at me under his eyebrows and crawls backwards out the living room. Then he's banging the cups on the tiles Dave laid and I worry about the scuff marks and whether I'll hear the end of it. He gets mad when I spank him. Like his mama, only Annabee hit back. I'd slap her wrist when she'd reach for a cake I was frosting, and she'd clench her pretty jaw and say Grandma, you bitch! This one's sweeter but stronger. If he ever goes mean, I won't be able to handle him on my own.

A lady across the street planted such beautiful gladiolas. I told her so the other day when she was getting the mail. I tried to shout it across the yard, but I guess she couldn't hear because she crossed the street and said her name was Lillian. She's an older woman, younger than me. She and her husband go to Florida half the year and hire Dave to keep the house up while they're gone. He mows the lawn and blows the leaves out the gutters and checks the pipes when the temperature goes under. She asked me over for tea, but I said No, it was only the flowers.

Dave's working for himself now. He says he's had it with contractors telling him not to do things the way he wants. He bought some shacks to fix up and rent, so we'll see. In the meantime, he's doing odd jobs for the neighbors and mowing just about every lawn in Diamond. He rode his mower past my window every fifteen minutes this morning till I realized he was mowing the whole street's lawn at once. I can't imagine it's quicker that way. He just likes to be a pain in the ass. Pretends there aren't lines to cross till someone has to remind him. Bored out of his mind is what I think. He asks when you're coming. He's blowing leaves across the lawns now.