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## Of Two Things at My Door This Morning

Albert Goldbarth

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## *Of Two Things at My Door this Morning*

one is a newspaper  
 rolled up to about the fist-thick obduracy  
 of the clubs I see they're using, when I unroll the news,  
 on a small bent road in another country.  
 A woman's been dropped in the road  
 like a basket of filthy laundry; a boy I imagine  
 is her boy stands a few feet off, with laughter  
 on his face—so goofy, so enormously goofy, you see  
 his second of understanding has given way to a saving  
 incomprehension. That's all: the boy, his mother,  
 and the handiwork of five crack guardsmen  
 showing up as a dampness crusting between her shoulders.  
 Here's what she did: nothing. They needed some  
 practice. The clubs just begged to be used. She's lucky  
 the boy wasn't butt-raped, left  
 beside her to mingle the small leak of his anus-blood  
 with her more major pour. Because it happens, you know.  
 When God looks away. Or maybe, worse,  
 looks hard at it, allows it, enjoys. If God exists  
 in a world where this happens. Here, if He does, He's  
 somewhere in the dots that mean the sky  
 in a newspaper photograph. Or in  
 between the dots. The dots are like the atoms of whatever  
 substance God lives in, if "lives" is the word,  
 if anyone cares after even one morning of headlines.  
 The other thing at my door is

this lady, in white so absolute  
 she's like a bottle of cream a deliveryman from an earlier time  
 might leave. In back, a hummingbird  
 bobbins through 8 a.m. light and crepe myrtle.  
 The whole day's shaking off sleep, its first words  
 not invented yet. She's knocking to ask if the Lord  
 has entered my life, and if not will I speak with her  
 a moment because the Lord is Eternal Joy.  
 She believes this. She doesn't want money.  
 She hands me my paper. Her whole planet beams.  
 I think of science fiction—somehow  
 there's room for her in the universe, too.

*Albert Goldbarth*