

The Sticking Point

by Bill Yarrow

I went for a walk to reinvigorate my head,
but the grass on the side of the access road was
wet, and the sucking mud stuck to the sides of
my new shoes. I scraped my soles on a railroad tie
and used a piece of granite to remove some of the rest
of the mud, and, were it not for some sticking point
I can't articulate, I might have been able to remember
back to boyhood and its muddier shoes and scraping
sticks and river's edge and summer wounds, but I was
dirty and hurting and my mind was stuck in the ugly
present, and all I could think about was funerals
and me standing on a mound of dirt and me shoveling.
And with each shovelful, I sank a fraction of an inch
deeper into the dirt until my suit shoes were caked
completely with black mud. Looking up, I saw the guests
walking slowly to their shiny cars. The wind let out a
funereal howl. "Get in the car," my wife called from our
van. "Hold on!" I said. I bent over and finished cleaning
off my shoes with my debit card. I felt dark, dark
like a heron on one leg in a Florida pond at dusk.

