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## How Not to Always Talk about The Same Things

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# Lantz: How Not to Always Talk about The Same Things

## HOW NOT TO ALWAYS TALK ABOUT THE SAME THINGS

Nick Lantz

A hawk nested on the roof of your building,  
and for six years every  
poem you wrote, every kiss you gave

your wife, was a rabbit that either escaped  
into the hedges or died in the air.

Millipedes are born and die by the thousands  
on the laundry room floor and never dream  
of the moon. The book's spine is broken

out of love. The trumpet sings  
with borrowed lungs.

You could try bending the mended wheel, weeping  
tears of milk. Jesus won't appear twirling  
a sword like a baton.

To wit, the overturned garbage can,  
locks of hair swept  
across the barber's floor, the crow whose head  
swivels like a closed-circuit camera.

The bus stop shaman claims man has not one  
soul but many. A soul  
for drinking wine. A soul for kissing,  
for laughing. A soul for taking out

the garbage. A soul for peeling apples  
at the sink, for losing

utility bills. A soul for writing checks.  
A soul for doing  
nothing. A soul for sucking a blackberry-stained finger  
until the stain is gone.

Carbon from all of the burned books is born again  
in the mustaches of generals and the long ears  
of rabbits. If you can hear

the tremor of the marching band  
practicing on a field miles away, count  
yourself lucky. The world's oldest

musical instrument is a flute carved  
from a vulture's leg bone.  
Though it is more correct not to say *oldest*  
but *oldest surviving*.

Can you imagine: those lips? that throat? that music?

You see a truck with "James Tate Plumbing"  
stenciled on its side panel, and you imagine  
the eponymous plumber  
elbow deep in a drain, coming up not with a fist

of hair but snow globes of Pompeii, the jawbone  
of an ass, the endless red ribbon  
of a rabbit's intestine, the half-darkness

of our bedroom when  
the shades are drawn.