

DEATH IS BORING

JACOB OET

The porcupine and I walk out
during the funeral. A ghost tags behind,
but disappears when we cross
the street. Years pass, we become
traveling magicians. We astound
with feats of clairvoyance:

“Calvin hurries his mom back
to the white cot, lips stained from her
drink at the water fountain,”
intones the porcupine. And I add:
“She shivers and burps. Calvin wraps
his tiger fur coat on her. He leaves.”

We pull clean diapers out of our hats.
We walk backwards. I tell every child:
“Look at the dark changing clouds
that you are.” And when we are
alone, the porcupine sings
walk one way, and never come back.