

PETER RICHARDSON

## Cora Waits for a Bright Idea from her Boys

Even in the well-watered east  
it will gall her to see the jobless  
after karaoke night at the tavern  
shrug at diminishing expectations.

She'll recall a childhood memory  
of hands fluttering in holy water  
as a man washed his ravaged face  
before proceeding to an altar rail.

"The bottle owned him," she'll say,  
and her sons will picture that town  
where their welterweight grandpa  
ventured into savings and loans.

Did resurrecting that scarecrow  
keep them from leaving university  
when their own father drove south  
with a little slip of a diner waitress?

Better they chop up an old Packard  
and weld it back into a tractor,  
than motor into the heart of Dixie  
with a dipsomaniac carhop.

She'll be rooting for her sons  
the moment they shine their shoes  
and act as though they had a right  
to stand in line for a paycheque. She,

with her memories of scarlet fever  
and her father's short-lived bank,  
will lift her glass to the first sign  
one of them has a bright idea.