

SEASONS OF THE DAY

PATRICK McSHERRY

In the world of an eight-year-old boy
in East Texas
in Burlington, population eight
seasons are marked by time of day not year.

Ben Fox is repairing a tractor in his shop
a rusted weathered farm implement
that stands on the dirt floor soaked in sweat and motor oil
that stands under the tin roof soaked in morning sun
that stands surrounded by wooden beams and shiplap.
In the morning season,
beside my grandmother's home.

Rubin Fox works in his store tending the coke box
a vat of frigid water holding cola bottles
that stands on the oak floor painted with tobacco juice
that stands in the noon-time air smelling of bubble gum and kerosene
that stands in view of the towering gas-pumps filled with ethyl.
In the heat of the day,
beside my grandmother's home.

Mondo and Chico are playing in the yard
two brown sons of migrant farm workers
they shape play-things with clever hands rough as brown cinder blocks
they speak a language that I don't understand
they seek out fireflies to hold in a clear glass jar.
As we play in the last hours of daylight,
beside my Grandmother's house.

Aunt Mo smiles as she looks out from her porch
an angel with large arms that remind me of wings
arms that hold everything with care

(Continued)

SEASONS OF THE DAY

Arms that can dispatch a chicken for our dinner
Arms that protect and guide an eight-year-old boy.
In the evening moonlight,
beside my Grandmother's house.

In East Texas, in Burlington, population eight.