

Because We Couldn't Afford Fireworks
Richard LeDue

Shot the Christmas lights out of a birch tree
one New Years Eve. Glass falling
like heavy snowflakes, silence louder
afterwards. My father's rifle
weighed against my adolescent hands,
was actually scared to pull the trigger,
feel the jolt into my shoulder, teaching me
the pain that comes with power.
Can't decide if we were a one gun
salute, or firing towards a sky
where my Sunday school god lived,
immortal on his throne, grey beard
symbolic of a mastery over tigers and
lambs. Neighbours called the police,
officer relieved we were done by the
time he arrived, joked about the noise,
how people were in bed, as if sleep
had more right than sound, dreams
forgotten in morning light more valuable
than the smell of gunpowder on a winter night.

Richard LeDue was born in Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada, but currently lives in Norway House, Manitoba with his wife and son. His poems have appeared in various publications throughout 2019, and more work is forthcoming in 2020, including a chapbook from Kelsey Books.