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Noonday Elegy

Walter Rhead

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NOONDAY ELEGY

WALTER RHEAD

The boy stopped breathing half past noon, his leg
Bone bleaching in the sun and dripping life
Onto the sun-bleached road. Not quite enough
Heads rimmed about to block out all the mid-
Day light, which puddled on his sunken eyes,
And pooled around his mouth. That whole noon hour
The air stood still among the rows of cars
Now idling in the road, vacated by
A silent mass of passersby, who wave
Like corn in wind; but there's no wind, nor is
There breath to spare among the pale faces
Gathered there to gaze at the shallow grave
Dug by the boy's stopped breath—which stopped the hum
Of transport, and the air and noonday sun.