

## Hale-Bopp

The radio blasted.  
I crawled from my bed to shut the thing off,  
Then left my body to lay limply sprawled on its edge.  
It was 5 o'clock.  
What was I doing?  
I didn't want to get up!  
But look, just look! With any luck  
The clouds will be everywhere.  
The hallway was dimly lit and silent.  
The skylight. Just check the skylight.  
Peering back, three little stars almost as surprised as I was.  
Well, just a little further.  
We'll go out back - Shoes. I need shoes.  
The cold was a shock to my bare legs  
But the southern sky was rarely as clear as this.  
The hour was forgotten in the mad rush to gather myself  
And decent clothing.  
Only with the car at the end of the driveway  
Did I think to search north.  
A great spear, poised to plunge into the lake,  
Brighter than all the stars in the sky.  
Fleeing the trees that lined our street,  
I did not get far before necessity drove me from the road.  
Beside my car I shook,  
Hand clasping my lips lest they draw too much attention.  
Cheeks well-washed.  
Coherent thought? You must be joking.  
I did finally think to call him,  
But I returned to my senses before that impulse took hold.  
I went on alone instead,  
Searching for a lonely, dark view to frame my sword.  
Eventually, there would be one.  
A solitary farmhouse at the intersection of two dirt roads  
Would be its new victim.  
Time at last led me home.  
Two hours more I lay awake, too excited to sleep.  
Time to think, too much.

Glorious is a good word for Hale-Bopp,  
But the rest is suddenly tainted by regret.  
Wouldn't it be more fun to share  
My joy, and also theirs?  
Still, it does not touch my addiction.  
What have I left?  
Despite the little regret, it is the best yet,  
And it reminds me of the choice I made.  
The compromise I accepted.  
Don't make me choose for real. Don't rub it in.  
Everything else would lose.  
All those bloody reminders.  
Please, don't let them be too late.