

CYRUS CONSOLE (1977 -)



Cyrus Console grew up in Topeka and currently studies creative writing in the University of Kansas doctoral program. He has worked as a metal worker and waiter as well as part-time instructor. His poetry returns to some of the oldest Anglo Saxon poetic traditions—delight in wordplay and riddles. He creates Rubik cubes made of his own subsets of vocabularies. Interlocking phrases suggest new structures, and readers enlarge their own vision by following Console's playful, inventive constructions.

In this selection from *Brief Under Water*, whose title refers to Kafka's *Brief an den Vater (Letter to His Father)*, Console connects mathematical progressions on language. He labels each section of this long sequence of prose poems with binary-based numbers. This poem (40 in the decimal system) appears to begin with a salutation, "dear Dad," informing him of a strong wind that rocked the "television antenna." The last sentence is like a bookend to that suggested narrative—the narrator ends the story with a box kit broken in that same wind. Shifts in perspective, specifically elevation, continue throughout. Also, each sentence builds on the one before, with words repeated and shifted into different parts of speech. The word "wind" (breeze) twists (or winds, with a long "i") throughout the poem's beginning. The original connection of the two meanings of "wind" converge. At the end of this prose poem, "broke" is a verb with connotations referencing weather, cover, and sun emerging from clouds. Then Console ends with both words in the final: "windbreak."

Brief Under Water: 100111

Dear dear, I put down, dear Dad, the great television antenna swayed in the wind. The meadow moved in long swathes under the wind. The wind swept the meadow around the cedars, as they were moss-grown rocks in a river of dry grass. In the wind the boys made a handsome tableau, their hair slanting vigorously from under their caps. The thick steel guys stood waves in the wind. Close by the anchors the wind came in towering chords. The wind fluted in the mouths of the gaping boys. Dead bees blew in the wind. Rain filled the sky. The rain pelted the rainwater, sheeting the meadow in incident light. The boys slowed at the line of trees. They walked into the trees. The trees surrounded the boys. The boys disappeared into the trees. The weather broke. The boys broke cover. The clouds broke up and the sun broke through. The box kite lay broken in a windbreak.

Education: Cyrus Console graduated from Topeka High School and attended the University of Kansas, where he received a BS in Organismal Biology (2000). He attended Bard College for the MFA in Writing (2004). He works on a PhD in the University of Kansas English Department.

Career: Console's book *Brief Under Water* (Burning Deck 2008) is a collection of prose poems, and a chapbook is *Okay Tony* (The Song Cave 2009). He has won the Ana Damjanov Poetry Prize; Fund for Poetry Award; Victor Contoski Poetry Prize; and William Herbert Carruth Poetry Prize. He has published in *Boston Review*, *No: A Journal of the Arts*, *Critical Quarterly*, and *Lana Turner*. Recent readings include the Poetry Project at St. Mark's Church, Big Tent series in Lawrence, and the Holloway Series at University of California, Berkeley.