

## My Life

Jack Myers

was never large enough even for a B movie  
though I think I've felt as deeply as Brad Pitt.  
No one I grew up with ever became famous  
or notorious on that spit of land that ended in the sea.  
But we became as adept at reading storm warnings  
in the muscle and color of water as we did in a face.

In the cold-war doldrums of the 50s, all my teachers  
hated teaching. We were such little shits back then  
I thought who could blame them, and became a teacher  
so I could show these younger versions of myself  
how to open their hearts and enter into a different,  
richer kind of darkness that exists in them.

We were an obstinate desert people given a single animal  
which we rode and milked and roasted and skinned.  
The stories strangers told us about fabulous places  
we'd never get to taught us how to open a door in rock  
and go inward, how to widen our hearts with longing  
and a song and bang along on a drum skin and a string.

I think Mother and Father seemed larger than life because  
we were smaller than them. That's how our life felt then, heroic.  
We felt Fate sitting and watching in the empty bleachers  
as surely as our shadows on the ground were having fun  
parodying us. We didn't think making everything from  
one thing was very special. We thought *we* were special,

and the day would come when some of us would finally  
break through our smaller selves to prove it, and then  
we'd have the luxury of looking over our shoulder at a

beginning we wouldn't want to return to any more than Marilyn Monroe wanted to be Norma Jeane Mortenson born in the charity ward of the L.A. County Hospital again.

When I think how far we've come and how epic our struggles were and how huge it feels to be alive, I wonder what it is in us that needs to feel larger. Was it ever possible to be bigger than ourselves? Something eternally young in me jumps up and says *Of course it is!* But the teacher in me, the one who has seen it all and looks like he hates teaching, says please sit down.