

*Did you read
about that girl
with...*

You wouldn't

believe what

came out of

my...

How could we

have been so...

TRANSITORY ENDINGS

I wake up and it's three a.m.,
the ward of car thieves and bats,
my neurons firing like car alarms,
a mesmerizing mandala
of exploding suns in the multiverse –
that approximation of all that is stupefying.

Paralyzed with angst,
I lie here unproductive,
scolding myself for
my ignorance of Eliot,
the new physics,
the old hunger.

I used to look to Freud for answers.
Now suddenly he's passé,
as in "Get over it;
your parents didn't know any better."
Maybe it's time to move beyond
this life of fitful births and small deaths.

Outside it's a cold morning
and I head for the bagel shop.
The heavy door swings open
to lonely appetites and heated imaginations,
people warming up to the future together
like family, like birds.

I overhear maddening fragments of conversation
as in some English teacher's writing assignment.
Finish these sentences and find the story:
"Did you read about that girl with..."
"You wouldn't believe what came out of my..."
"How could we have been so..."

I decide there are only transitory endings,
that whatever happens
is created by everyone.
There is no full knowing.
We are all finishing
each other's stories.

Jack Cooper



Jack Cooper's poetry has appeared in *The Evansville Review*, *The Pelican Review*, *The Meridian Anthology*, *Tundra*, *California Quarterly*, *Poet Lore*, *Runes*, and many other journals. His awards include runner-up in *Georgetown Review's* 2006 writing contest and Honorable Mention in *California State Poetry Society's* 2005 annual contest. He lives and writes in Valley Glen.