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Suicide Note

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R. SCOTT YARBROUGH

For Bill Hall

He used a German Luger his father toted
back from WWII. Imagine what that gun
had to do to get back to Abilene, Willis Street.
It could have just as easily rusted under sand
on Omaha beach or pushed up flowers in a garden
in Moulin Rouge. But someone decided
it needed to float an ocean. He shot himself in the chest.

Suicide is a secret that is just about to spill and color
the earth a color besides blood red. Blood is easier.

He was left handed, so he would have had
to hold the barrel with his right
just away from his chest and pull
the trigger with the thumb and index of his left
hand, like a looking glass searching for a purpose.

I mean, suppose the calculation. Suppose
he would have hung himself: cutting the rope;
is it strong enough; which tree; how far
should I fall before it catches; the measuring
tape; looking up "Hangman's Noose."

That might
be where he saw a picture of the human heart,
in the "H's," and how it's just to the left of center
like he was.

Then, he must have considered
how that indifferent bullet with hollow head
would spread and push its way into his heart
like an instant cancer, indifferent.

Suicide is everything that leads up to it. But ultimately
it is that second when one jumps or pulls or thinks
the world is better off without them. None are right and
he was wrong. We needed him suffering or not.

So now I'll have to make my own Colorado Bulldogs
at the family reunion and apologize for my fingers
trembling off the neck of my guitar during his eulogy.
Now, I'll have to try to remember his megaphone laugh
and his Texas running shorts pulled up so high you
could see his jewels.

What was so bad that a bottle
of wine and key lime pie couldn't cure?

I really wish he wouldn't have done that.