

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Matt Bialer: Two New Poems

Matt Bialer · Wednesday, February 19th, 2014

*Matt Bialer is the author of six books of poetry including Radius (Les Editions du Zaporogue), Already Here, Ark, Black Powder, The Bloop (all from Black Coffee Press) and Bridge (Leaky Boot Press). His poems have appeared in many print and online journals including La Zaporogue, Green Mountains Review, Gobbet, Forklift Ohio and H\_NGM\_N.*

*Cultural Weekly is proud to premiere these two new poems.*

\*\*\*\*\*

## TELL THEM WHAT I SAW

They are trying to revive me  
 Floating above the Resus Area I am part  
 Of a study – The Division of Perceptual Research  
 The white patches of heaven on my chest  
 Emergency medical physicians, nurses, technicians  
 Lean over me Outside I can see my wife, two grown sons  
 Weeping, a prayer circle Psalm 34:19 The Lord  
 Always brings us through My son's track and field gear  
 I'm above the nurses station Laughter, tonight's double date  
 At the Well My mind more clear Bright light everywhere  
 The doctor motions for the defibrillator paddles to shock me back  
 I remember, the boys little, we climbed Mt. Greylock – miles  
 Of farms, the curve of the earth They commence cardiopulmonary  
 Resuscitation, even pound my chest I can see the video monitors  
 Placed at the top of the ceiling Psi Effects Altered States  
 Of consciousness If I come back, tell them what I saw 15 feet  
 Above: Two cheetahs  
 Racing across a great yellow plain A finish line Kingdom of Light

\*\*\*

## PAST LIFE

The nightmares haven't stopped  
 Kicking, thrashing His mother wakes

Him, he's screaming 3 year old boy, otherwise  
 Happy toddler Flopping around in his bed  
 Like a broken power line Then the actual words:  
 "Plane on fire! Blue Bear! Little man can't get out!"  
 At Hobby Lobby – lifts a balsa wood propeller plane out of  
 The bin "That's not a bomb Mommy. That's a drop tank"  
 Distinguish World War II planes – P-51 Mustangs, Spitfires, Wildcats  
 Drowsy in bed, reveals that he flew a Corsair, Japanese shot him down,  
 Blue bear again, the name of the ship he took off from With my wrinkled  
 Hands I dust off the photo frame, bleached shot of him, smiling from  
 The cockpit – 65 years ago

These young parents of a boy, hearing the memories of my decades  
 Lost older brother Boy's father, an oil executive, doesn't know  
 Why he is at this reunion This is crazy USS Natoma Bay  
 San Diego, Grant Hill ballroom Frail veterans at tables:  
 Maps, journals, photographs Chasing his son's memories, not yet  
 Potty trained My brother's memories No one knows what  
 Blue bear means Someone's nickname? He finds the best  
 Friend his boy mentioned – Jack, rear gunner, now in a wheelchair  
 Bullets and bombs exploding everywhere, aircraft overhead  
 Plane right next to him – his friend, my brother, last mission  
 Raid near Iwo Jima, March 3, 1945 Hit head on, middle of  
 The engine Nothing but debris

Boy's father calls Doesn't want to upset me  
 He and his wife believe their little boy –  
 My long dead brother Can they visit? Fly to Springdale  
 From Baton Rouge My big brother 6 feet tall, 21 years old  
 Loved flying Sang on the radio, in a choir Red Sails in the Sunset  
 Before basic training took me to the county fair Water guns,  
 Spin and Win Lots of prizes Down the midway – fireworks  
 Bursts, rings of gold-green stars, twinkle and flutter down An  
 Old lady now, I wear my plaid blouse, black slip-ons Serve  
 A bowl of nuts The boy, five now, calls me Annie Parents  
 Say it's rude He was the only one who ever called me that  
 Our older sister Ruth, gone now Calls her Roof Mortified  
 When Mama took the job, common maid Boy's father asks  
 About the blue bear I shrug, tell them I don't know After  
 They leave, out of a cardboard box, the clear plastic bag –  
 Charred blue teddy bear I can still smell the gasoline

This entry was posted on Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 9:21 am and is filed under [Poetry](#)  
 You can follow any responses to this entry through the [Comments \(RSS\)](#) feed. You can leave a  
 response, or [trackback](#) from your own site.

