

## IMITATIO

by TK Lee

1.

But of indifference, ~~wasn't he~~—no, he **was (he was!)** still learning,  
Brueghel, trying for the first time  
to suffer. And when it didn't come from fool-women burning  
this or that dinner or from fool-men with grunting fingerfuls of dirty words in traffic late  
again for this dinner for that leftover dinner for something like dinner;  
it was then, he thought to notice the children—sprung forth wholly made  
swollen with indifference— and yet, at how curiously they would climb  
out of their cribs, disturbing plate and cup, with fleshy cheek and lip, trying  
to remind their jabberjaw parents how easy it is to forget:  
If what goes up must come down, then falling isn't failing, it's another way of flying.

2.

You're thinking: That Icarus chose to drown, a purposeful glut of wax and wing; or better yet,  
you're thinking: That Brueghel should've done more about skinned knees, less about the sinner.

3.

Brueghel's different. Bothered his brush can't pull a glance from the budding, callow head  
of the plough man — offish, ignoring one his own age — who'd rather plow on instead,  
likely trying to convince Brueghel that it's real men who stay the course, that it's right to let  
Icarus sop a gob of boiled feathers, lesson *learned*, right in front of his own face!

The plough man though (and *we're* meant to be the plough man, to some extent)  
will come to realize he's (read: *we're*) left to be the only witness...without consent,  
without dinner, and, it seems, without the regret  
of not caring in the first place.