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# Three Poems

*by Steve Meador*

## Sign Language

There was never a conversation with Susie,  
no grunted words slung from a passing swing  
or breathless banter rolled from the high  
end of the teeter-totter.

There is no voice to recall, only a plaid dress  
draped over a white blouse. The same dress worn  
day after day, which murmured its own words  
beneath the dark tongue of her ponytail.

Near the end of the year, after I had pissed  
my pants because someone hadn't flipped  
the red circle hanging on the restroom door  
to green, Susie finally had something to say.

I looked across two aisles and she pointed  
her finger at me, then touched it to the corner  
of her eye. She repeated the motions. Slowly  
spreading her legs she lowered the finger  
and aimed it between them, at the yellow panties.

I have never read Robert Fulghum's book,  
but I damn-well know that he didn't learn  
*everything* in kindergarten.

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## High and Low Tide

A tsunami of Somali boys ripped over the threshold.  
They scattered like bits of seashells and filled aisles  
like a black tide. Hands lapped at the store shelves,  
hoping to be quicker than the eye. Tense minutes  
of ebb and flow passed before we told them to get out.

The oldest, the pre-pimple alpha thief, asked what  
we would do to shoplifters. I snatched the fisherman's  
billy from my pocket and stung my palm with a slap,  
"First, I'd wait until the prick walks out the door—  
everything has to be legal—then creep up behind him,

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whack him viciously on the head time after time after time. A sea of blood would spew into the gutter.

“Then I would pick some weeds, sweep the sidewalk, take out the garbage and wait and wait before calling the rescue squad. Poor brainless bastard would scorch like a beached porpoise. Come, boys, see the weeds in my daylilies. Look at the sand on my sidewalk and those full trash cans.” Behind me I heard shuffling feet recede across the threshold and squawks from a flustered flock of gulls.

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## **Monday Morning at the Diner**

I went to the convention,  
it was alright I guess,  
except they had these young girls  
trying to serve that shit  
they called la-tay and capacini.  
I wouldn't drink it,  
hell, I got a whole muddy river  
running through my place  
what looks just like the crap  
they claimed was coffee.

I told 'em come on to my town,  
we'll hop over to the diner,  
order a big 'un, black.  
Now that's coffee that'll flutter your tongue,  
knock you panties past your knees,  
and if you want it to look like  
that muddy-ass river you can either  
pump it full of cream, or go scoop  
a cup of river water.

They giggled, then the one with the little  
titties said they weren't allowed  
to leave the convention center.  
That was probably for good cause.  
They would likely both drown,  
even though the river  
is only peter-deep in most places.

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**Steve Meador's** book *Throwing Percy from the Cherry Tree*, released by D-N Publishing in 2008, was an entrant for a National Book Award and a Pulitzer Prize for poetry. He has been widely published, resulting in several Pushcart nominations. Recent work appeared in *Quicksilver*, *Hobble Creek Review*, *qarrtsiluni*, *Strong Verse* and many other print and electronic journals. Pudding House released two of his chapbooks in 2007. He has been a real estate broker in Calif, Ohio, and Florida for the last 30 years and currently lives in the Tampa area.