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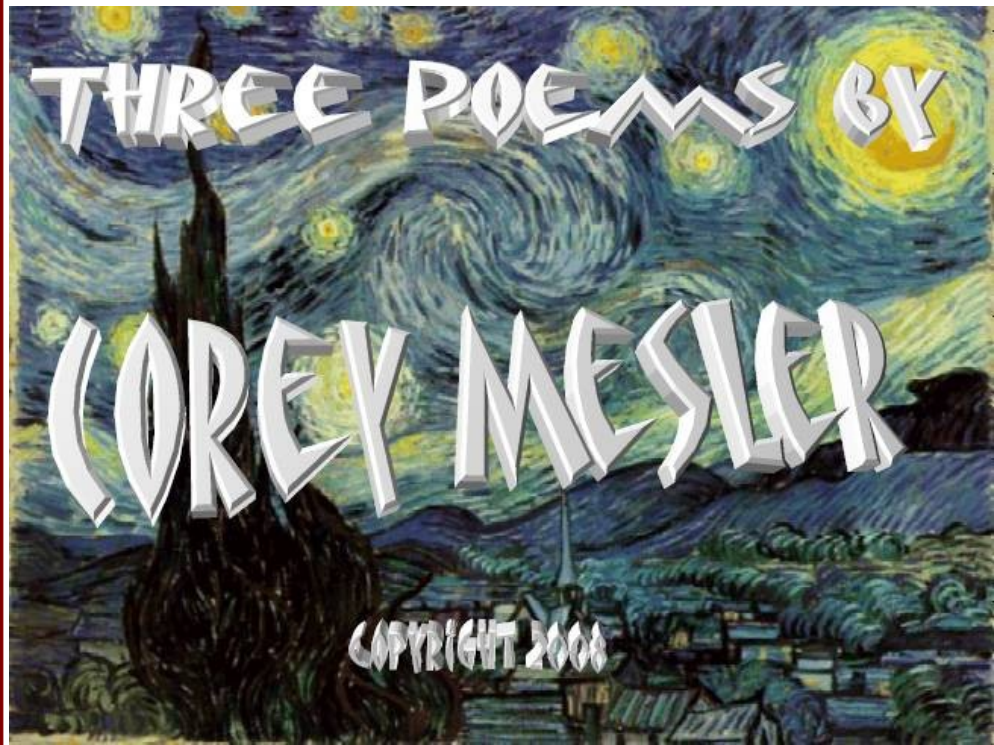
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### Into and Out of the Daylight

Like a careening car, like a deer  
running from a fancy,  
I spill the uncountable words onto  
the desk, shake the old tree  
for its nuts, each one a small world  
into which I may venture  
if I am pure of heart, pure of intention.  
And you sit in the corner, as  
still as death, and point out to me every  
obstacle and every stumbling  
block and soon I am unable to begin,  
even to put the first foot down.  
I thank you for the silence. I thank you  
for damning me to pleasures  
I once thought I should forego, back  
when you and I were a fiery wheel,  
a trip into and out of the daylight.

### The Literacy Council Accolade

I stepped to the podium  
to pick up the award.  
It was a book, a book of glass.  
I made a speech.  
I used words that clanged  
and shook the frosting  
from the cakes.  
I was humble, nearly absent.  
Afterwards, I accepted  
hands from strangers and friends.  
I put my arm around my son.  
I had gone to the ceremony  
and stayed and was re-  
warded. My wife sat by my  
side, glittering like gossamer.  
She was so beautiful language  
was almost unnecessary.

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And the glass book came home  
with us to remind us how  
fragile it all is, the award,  
the reason for it, and our re-  
calcitrant love of the impalpable word.

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## I'm Only as Good as My Medicine

The right combination.  
The ongoing experiment.  
The petri dish of the soul.  
It picks you apart.  
You line up the choices.  
You're chickenshit at heart.  
The choices collapse.  
The off, the on, the day  
when it fails to happen.  
The ongoing experiment.  
The way your loved ones  
look at you. Their eyes.  
The way your heart dis-  
engages. The trip  
to the box. The right com-  
bination. Your loved ones.  
The pills lined up like soldiers.  
They line up like soldiers.  
The ongoing—the right—  
the combinations collapse.  
It fails and happens anyway.

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Corey Mesler's prose and/or poetry has appeared in *Turnrow*, *Adirondack Review*, *American Poetry Journal*, *Paumanok Review*, *Yankee Pot Roast*, *Monday Night*, *Elimae*, *H\_NGM\_N*, *Center*, *Poet Lore*, *Forklift OH*, *Euphony*, *Rattle*, *Jabberwock Review*, *Dacey Brown*, *Cordite*, *Smartish Pace*, and others. He has two novels from Livingston Press: *Talk: a Novel in Dialogue* (2002) and *We are Billion-Year-Old Carbon* (2007). His novels received blurbs from Lee Smith, Robert Olen Butler, Steve Stern, Miles Gibson, Suzanne Kingsbury, Frederick Barthelme, Marshall Chapman, George Singleton and John Grisham, among others. I also have many chapbooks, both poetry and prose, available. My first full-length collection of poems, *Some Identity Problems*, is due out from Foothills Publishing. My poem, "Sweet Annie Divine," was chosen for Garrison Keillor's *The Writer's Almanac*. His works have been nominated for the Pushcart numerous times. With his wife he owns Burke's Book Store, one of the country's oldest (1875) and best independent bookstores. He can be found at [www.coreymesler.com](http://www.coreymesler.com).