



Weekly Poem: 'Distracted by an Ergonomic Bicycle'

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By James Arthur

The image shows a SoundCloud player interface. At the top left is the PBSNewsHour logo (a red circle with a white play button) and the text 'PBSNewsHour Weekly Poem: 'Distrac...'. To the right is the SoundCloud logo and a 'Share' button. Below the text is a waveform visualization of the audio. At the bottom left is a 'Cookie policy' link, and at the bottom right is the number '335'.

On a rainy morning in the worst year
of my life, as icy eyelets shelled the street,
I shared a tremor with a Doberman
leashed to a post. We two were all the world
until a bicyclist shot by, riding

like a backward birth, feet-first,
in level, gentle ease, with the season's hard breath
between his teeth. The rain was almost ice, the sky
mild and pale. I saw a milk carton bobbing by
on a stream of melting sleet.

A bicyclist. A bicyclist. He rode away—
to his home, I guess. I went home,
where I undressed, left my jacket
where it fell, went straight to bed, and slept
for two days straight. But those clicking wheels

kept clicking in my head, and though
I can't say why, I felt not only *not myself*,
but that I'd never been ... that I

was that man I hardly saw, hurling myself
into the blast, and that everything
I passed—dog, rain, cold, the other guy—
I left in my wake, like afterbirth.

James Arthur is the author of "**Charms Against Lightning**," a debut poetry collection published by Copper Canyon Press in October. He has received the Amy Lowell Travelling Poetry Scholarship, a Wallace Stegner Fellowship in Poetry, a residency at the Amy Clampitt House and a Discovery/The Nation Prize.

Photo by Sean Hill.

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By – Tom LeGro