

Timothy Martin

## O Fortunate One

*A search of Lake Pocotopaug for a reported drowning victim was called off here Tuesday when it was realized that one of the volunteers helping the search was the person being sought.*

—Newspaper story, 1957

Happy is the one who pushes himself out of  
the bullet's path, who leans a ladder  
against the burning building to fetch herself  
from the roof. The one who moves levers  
to winch his body, breathing, out of the treefast car.

May it be said that we were more agent  
than object. That we raised a thousand hands  
against death so it retreated to its tent  
to sulk over new plans. Happy are we  
who break the ax that fells trees for our coffins,  
who rig the hearses to drive in circles  
while we run our fingers through the bagged rivers  
of next year's seeds.

