

BLACK LAB

Poems DAVID YOUNG



EXCERPTED FROM

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BY DAVID YOUNG

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Churchill called his bad visits from depression
a big black dog. We have reversed that, Winston.
We've named him Nemo, no-one, a black hole
where light is gulped—invisible by night:
by day, when light licks everything to shine,
a black silk coat ablaze with inky shade.
He's our black lab, wherein mad scientists
concoct excessive energy. It snows,
and he bounds out, inebriate of cold.
The white flakes settle on his back and neck and nose
and make a little universe.

It's best to take God backwards; even sideways
he is too much to contemplate, "a deep
but dazzling darkness," as Vaughan says.
And so I let my Nemo-omen lead me
onward and on toward that deep dark I'm meant
to enter, entertain, when my time comes. . .
The day wheels past, a creaky cart. I study
the rippling anthracite that steadies me,
the tar, the glossy licorice, the sable;
and in this snowfall that I should detest,
late March and early April, I'm still rapt
to see his coat so constellated, starred, re-starred,
making a comic cosmos I can love.

