

Darren C. Demaree

Emily as One Piece at a Time Until It Worked

Ungloved, if you can count the scars
on my hands, you can count the ways
I've tried to love Emily. Each slant
towards gentle is taken up by the strong
woman, decided upon, re-shaped
into an acceptable advance. I did not
know how to handle such sharp light.
I still don't. I know the cost now
& that has done little to my approach.

Adoration #126

for my father

Instinctively, we both lean to-
wards the curve of the wild, black
branches of our family tree

& though there is no fruit, the bird
houses have nearly drowned the sky
with the intention to protect

every wind from every
wing that passes through the foliage.
It is music. We want it safe.

Darren C. Demaree's poems have appeared, or are scheduled to appear in numerous magazines/journals, including the *South Dakota Review*, *Meridian*, *The Louisville Review*, *Grist*, and the *Colorado Review*. He is the author of *As We Refer to Our Bodies* (2013, 8th House), *Temporary Champions* (2014, Main Street Rag), and *Not For Art Nor Prayer* (2015, 8th House). He is the Managing Editor of the *Best of the Net Anthology* and is currently living and writing in Columbus, Ohio with his wife and children.