

Russell

Philip White

You'd been the one taken out and talked to during stories of Jesus.
On the scuffed pew you stuffed the blessed bread
in your mouth and blew it out, laughing.
So when they found you in blood at the foot of the stairs,
the bullet you'd swallowed trenched in your brain,
I judged you. With your last, held breath,
you'd made flagrant, perpetual boyhood—and I?
A bland mortality? Eternal life?
Even Jesus could not save you now, sprawling there
in the dark hall, a shock of crow-black hair and eyes.