

Long Paddock

John Carey

While they run the titles

Ignacio Gomez brushes his sealskin hair
before taking to the night and the street.
He is living a significant moment
that waits to be taken up in the teeth
of a headline and shaken. Officer
Flaherty cleans his gun with his tongue
then puts it away. He was only fooling.
May Feinstein, younger than she looks in the novel,
wiggles into the crime-scene dress
her father warned her against. A dog
of melting-pot inheritance cocks its leg
at a hydrant then stares up its leash
at a genderless hand that means
business, wrenching the animal back
to its exercise. Was that an unusual
ring on his/her finger, something
we need to keep our eye on for later?
If we're not distracted by the soundtrack,
meanstreet percussion: sewer-grates,
blundstone boots and dustbin lids.
This might be the time to leave,
before it develops into something less
than we start to imagine, before the lips
move and we're led by the crimping nose
up the path of an overripe garden.