

ROBERT CURRIE

Two Love Poems from James Dickie

I

Back in Houston triumphant to read again at Rice he tries
to focus on the audience other poets fans a few old friends
his wife down front their two young sons beside her

He grips the podium that holds him steady
drunk perhaps but not too drunk to read
the words he knows will always work He wins

them with a primal rush of metaphor grins
announces he will try something new "Adultery"
Deep in their seats breath sliced off his sons submerge

They shudder as onstage their father shudders too
pleading with his dear one his lover oh God
no he can't bear don't do it now please ohhh

It's worse than watching him unzipped revel in a public blow job
Between them their mother does not cannot move Her eyes
glazed and brittle stare ahead sightless broken clay

II

She knows it's just a poem she tells herself
 it simply doesn't matter she will not
 let it matter she clings she cleaves

to one poem only "The Night Pool" where a man
 and woman float like light through the cool evening
 just as they she and Jim so often do

warm together in the bright pool luminous
 a liquid moon beneath the dark until
 they rise into each other's arms and he

warms her wraps her round with towels
 The poem her poem is always there it is what she holds
 later when he is more famous still

a feature now for *Life* and *Playboy*
 when interviewers want it all everything
 he will tell them This one sure

this is one poem that gets it right
 revealing love that's really love
 yes and he wrote it for someone else

