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## Theodicy

Toby Goostree

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## Theodicy

I'm not asking for proof or an alibi,  
but when Your name comes up at accidents  
it would help to know what we're dealing with—  
wind that got away? The fact of ice,

black ice even, as risks crystallize?  
Or is it . . . *us*? As if the precipice  
isn't there until we look down; as if  
—what? Doubt could add risk. So could denial:

*Wildfires? Natural disasters? Or the avalanche*  
of setbacks, disappointments, even harm.  
Acquit Yourself! Dismiss the charges!  
Or, when You judge, call *me* to the bench;

put Your hand over the mic so the others  
won't hear, and You won't have to whisper.

*for Mark Walters*

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### Author biography

**Toby Goostree's** poems have appeared in *Santa Clara Review*, *Pittsburgh Poetry Review*, *Kansas City Voices* and *By and By Poetry*. He lives in Kansas City with his wife, Amy.

## “Votive Tablet” and “Heaven”

### VOTIVE TABLET

From the mouth of the boy the dove  
flutters in a circle and quickly hides  
in the mouth of his mother  
under the open dome