

How to Throw a Spear

Before you begin, you must love to hold
the spear between your fingers, love

the heft of its notched and polished shaft,
the sharpened point, deadly as innocence.

And when you begin, do not fear
your enemy's skill, his decorations

and medals for heroism in battle.
Do not think of the iron and leather

armor your enemy wears, his grimacing
facemask, his fearsome galloping horse.

Practice throwing the spear again
and again—you do not need a partner—

until it flies by itself in the chosen
direction, the keen-edged point piercing

the target clean as your knife slicing
an apple. That is also how to write a poem.

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