

## Asking Permission

Nelly Thiman

On Sunday afternoons,  
My father would teach me  
How to play with frisbees.  
He would go to the kitchen cabinet—  
Grab my mother's  
vintage, colored plates

And he would fling them  
into the day. .

My mother's screams  
were found in the hall,  
His name mouthed  
On my lips.

My father taught me  
how to ride life, then.

With bleeding and scabbed feet,  
I put my trust pedal breaks  
Training wheels  
I called—  
“Father!”

During pouring days,  
I would ask if I could  
shower off the day's sweat  
In the Caribbean rain.

And in an Icarus pursuit  
He would find me, hiding  
Behind a devilishly, lying  
smile  
Just to tell me—  
“No.”

My screams were found in the hall.  
My freedom  
Found on my mother's lips.

Murderer of birds  
I saw my dad to be, then!

Thirst to be something  
Else—  
I craved to see.

And every night on my knees,  
I taunted a god  
For permission to  
Live.