

Heaven revised

by [Jason Santalucia](#) in the [February 10, 2004](#) issue

The boy was thrown against the ground, his arms
flung wide so I could see
under the bent grille of the farmer's truck
his narrow chest rise and fall—so I could hear
between the swish of passing cars
that click of breath and bone.

Even now I watch the rain—but there was no rain—
spark against the road. I see his hair—
but from where I stood his face was turned—
soaked against the ripe
fruit of his cheek.

Listen,

the bus had stopped for gas.
I left my seat and walked across the empty lot
hoping for a sink to rinse my mouth.
I remember the black field
beyond the road, the moonless sky and how
I strained to tell heaven from earth.

Truth is, that morning no one was saved.
No one lit a cigarette and proclaimed *Never again*
to anything. Strange. How I can see
each orange fall from the bed of the truck,
thump onto the pavement and roll
gently to a stop.