

Spring 2021

Cherry Boy

John B. Oldenborg

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Cherry Boy

Cover Page Footnote

Winner of the 2021 Yellowwood Poetry Prize

CHERRY BOY

John B. Oldenberg

I

In his house the calendars were always set to March
In his house you always hit *CANCEL*
at least one second before the microwave dings
And you must deliver father's instant microwave coffee posthaste
And the newspaper from the driveway And throw
the cat into the pool —discipline her— And
Home Alone 2 always plays on the television And *Home Alone 2*
always plays on the television

II

Back then—
At the yacht club innocent
water bellowing ~>awooga
awoooooga<~ before high jumps
off high dives Have you ever
played kickball in the summer ? Had a summer
where pool noodles are hydro cannons ?
Used a hill to practice log-like skills ? Had a summer
camp counselor bless a batch of russet potato
salad before consumption ? I want
to be a hedonist of summer I want Aphrodite
to also long
In that translucent clamshell
I feel more leftover than ever Were you ever
a kickball spirit
spirited to the sun ?

III

Now only the manyfaced
windows speak Now
only blood cell sunsets and timber
ablazen All the yachts, stern
at first, bow at last, all
capsize without fanfare
and I swim with the rats to shore

IIII

And Oh Pensacola Oh
Pensacola
is sinking

IIIII

Szn of childhood and time larceny
Prank call 1-
800 flowers
Request an army of snails
Request hyacinths
for the Hussars -Now Emperor
Nero plays the fiddle having planted 1 and 800
suspiciously hot chrysanthemums

IIIIII

And Oh holy
waste of midsummer
Yeah! we say Tomorrow
we'll go whole fuckin' hog
On the last day of summer In the future One day

IIIIIIII

Today the best things about summer are tiny capybaras on the internet
Rats sleeping with miniature teddy bears

IIIIIIIIII

Now Cherry Boy hides from home
flirts “The convenience
store on Fifth and Capital,”
he tells her
“sells gasoline 10 cents
cheaper than normal.”
You wouldn’t believe
how many crickets were singing

JOHN B. OLDENBORG currently attends the University of Nevada Las Vegas where he is earning an MFA in poetry. He is the editor of [Young Doogan Magazine](#). His favorite pizza toppings are pepperoni and black olives. He is scared of the screaming guy from the band Death Grips.