

Ruby '81

Aesop Rock

July 4th, 1981, candles of a Roman ilk
Unloaded from a chevy truck
Into the home her folks had built
Patio was charcoals and extended fam in folding chairs
Safely arced around the yard to focus on the smoking flares
Couple cousins, uncles, aunts, mostly grown-ups, couple brats
Baby Ruby's only two
She's too close to the jumping jacks
Mommy scoops her to the house
Buckles up the booster seat
Rolls her to the storm door
Let her long for all the lunacy
Telephone distracting Mom
Ruby wriggles out her strap
Fingers push the plexi-glass
She's off into the sour patch
Past the pyrotechnics undetected and invisible
Woke the sleeping beagle skipping toward the kidney swimming pool
Off into the yawning blue
The splash would mummify the rocket-ships
Ruby's lungs were filling by the time her kin were cognizant
Many sprung and sprinted down
All arrive belated but
The beast she had earlier stirred had been alert since waking up
Canine let his gainer fly
Water top commotion grow
Howling guests assumed the cloven hoofs had come to do-si-do
Frenzied and congested deck
Part to let the elders see
Soggy beagle gently dragging Ruby in his yellow teeth
Laid the tiny body in the sun before her Father's feet
When she choked the liquid through her bluish lips he dropped his knee
Helped the air to reconvene
Towel his shaking Ruby off
EMT confirm the save
Everybody say
"Good dog! "