

The Meccano Set

I recall only one Christmas Eve on Lynch's Lane
with the distinct edges of a photograph
the others all mixed together like jujubes
in a glass jar only one Christmas Eve
when I prayed for a Meccano set for building
skyscrapers and bridges and towers in the air
the Meccano I didn't get while Grant Baker did

the fathers dropped in for a drink, a small one,
Skipper, and sang with Bing Crosby singing
in the snow, the snowfalling, always falling,
on Lynch's Lane while my grandmother danced
from window to window watching for Santa Claus
with reports about the weather and neighbours
and this Christmas Eve we all danced with her

the air afire red light broken
curses Grant's father in his underwear
staggered in the lane retched pictures
in the snow clung to the fence
police pulled him dragged him
like a toboggan Grant and his mother
watched watched him taken away

I recall that Christmas Eve because Grant
got the Meccano set I wanted and didn't get
and all winter he wouldn't let me play with it
and in June Grant and his mother moved away
and I bought his Meccano set for three dollars
still wrapped in plastic and built sturdy towers
of steel that couldn't be knocked down

CARL LEGGO