

First Place Prize Poetry

Joe Eggleston

Scandalizing the Librarians

Is what I would call it, but I've known too many
to believe they'd be shocked at finding us in delicto,
here, among the stacks. They pornographize the written word,
have laid them, as it were, lifelong: who knows the depths or heights
book-lust might have taken them, alone or together, some nights
or bright noontimes among the shelves, orgy of orgies
of pages breaking woven above the eye.

So no, lover, they'll tell us to stop
or maybe leave, or they'll call the campus cops,
but they know more than anyone what's driving us
today — these lengths of passion
and literary discourse. I should have known reading Proust in the patch
of sunlight to you out loud would bring us to canoodling. He's so flat
until you hear him. Feed me chocolates
and grapes from your own lips, then, and tell me again
why you think skirts are the best invention. We're getting caught,
there's no avoiding it, but we'll make it to the door
no problem; tell me how you
like the view, tell me how you
like me,
like me to press you
against the cold window glass and watch the snow
blow across the ruined maple standing guard
above the red bridge, its rough bark half gone,
and weathered white ivory peeking from beneath.