

QUEER

When I was a child, I had a problem.
I knew, with the naked knowing of youth,
I was queer, and would be all my life.

I also knew not to tell anyone.
Who would want to hear this?
Silence said: "Be silent.

Your desperation's your own."
I kept quiet, as best I could,
and walked quietly out of childhood.

—Steve Turtell