

Don Freund:

Popping Bubbles:
Four Poems of Emily Bobo

for Mixed Chorus a cappella

*for Dominick DiOrio and NOTUS,
the contemporary vocal ensemble of the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music*

1. Sweethearts
2. Popping Bubbles: Baby's First Birthday
3. The Wall of Mexico
4. This is Just to Say

Sweethearts

A long, long love ago, a boy

carved a heart into Grandma

Irwin's apple tree, and kissed

me, sweet as August apples.

We each outgrew our little tree,

its wooden heart, and happily

carved onto the world a living

heart for our own true families.

But each August, that little tree

still bears the fruit of our first kiss,

in a hundred sweet, red hearts.

Popping Bubbles: Baby's First Birthday

In the mist of happiness, her heart caught on some grumble in the distance, a truck
on the highway, a buzzing in the Dogwood, a rattle in the leaves—some sharp
stick caught in the imaginary ribs.

And all her joy popped like a bubble from the cheap, party-store, grab-bag bottle of dish
soap.

Not that anything had gone wrong, not that the world wasn't just-new-love-perfect.
But that it might.

And now she knew how much it all meant—how happy she could be—how
terrifying it was to be in love.

The Wall of Mexico

the rich do not escape
window-pictures of
razor wire walls
and mountains against
squatting
a boy crumbling
Styrofoam snow over
two girls dancing
midnight in the street
all the permanent poor

the permanent
squatting
the rich do not escape
wires and
walls
in the street
two girls dancing
mountains
Styrofoam snow
crumbling

crumbling boy
the rich do not escape
midnight
girls dancing
against
all the poor
windows
pictures of
walls and

the poor
escape
midnight
walls
dancing over
the rich

This is just to say

I have eaten
the heart you left
on my shoulder

and which
you were probably
saving
for someone taller

Forgive me
it was chocolate
so bitter
and so dark