Arts & Humanities

Poem "The Deal"

By Jeffrey Skinner '78SOA

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The younger man is trying to sell
some project to the older man.
The younger man’s hands move
over & above the maquette,
chopping the air here & there
in discreet emphasis. His
eyebrows lift to serious angle
at crucial moments of the pitch.
The older man mostly listens
but when he does speak
the younger man tilts his head &
leans in, squinting to read
all the older man does not say.

I can’t tell if the sale is made
or not — smiles & handshakes
follow, but would in either case.
Of course my father pops
back into life at just that moment,
walking in the restaurant door
with his oiled athletic grace,
smiling like he has a new joke to tell.
But he ignores my presence &
sits down in my chair, in me.
Too obvious, dad, I say. Besides —
like I’ve tried to tell you my entire life —
poetry & business don’t mix.

— *Jeffrey Skinner '78SOA*

Skinner's new book of poems, Glaciology, *will be published in 2013.*



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