

TEXT Vol 9 No 1 (April 2005)

Poetry contents

- Steve Evans, *Piano Lesson I: Prelude* page 2

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Steve Evans

Piano Lesson 1: Prelude

*before you play
you must empty your mind of music*

close your eyes
picture a plate with one cherry
its stalk a dry umbilicus
picture a struck match
that fizzes but will not light
imagine waking in winter
the cold floor's first touch
think of your mother
teaching you to tie laces
then kick off your shoes
imagine sheet after sheet
of blank paper
now open your eyes
cut an orange in half
and count the spokes
turn your lover's photo away
flex your fingers

when you have forgotten
the point of all this
even the existence of music
open the telephone directory
and look under 'Piano Lessons'

Steve Evans teaches literature and writing at Flinders University in South Australia. His sixth book, Luminous Fruit, was released in July 2003.

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