Obscurity (by Christine Biles)

What is

when is

where is

the point of complete obscurity?

The moment you realize four or five years of "doing" is thirteen;

where,

exactly,

a scar ends, and skin begins; when

elegant copper hands click to midnight, but the grandfather does not toll; the fact

that the you is the I, and the I am always you; seeing the mouse, the one you named Edolphus, white with a brown spot, lying dead

on the front porch.

Your Dad knows the answer, but he can't put it to words,

which must

be why

he mutters to himself while "doing" the dishes – something he's done for years, four or five, thirteen, though the muttering is something new.

Is what

is complete is when obscurity

is where
I say, "Good day,
Mr. Jones" to a large, black
dog, with a British accent,
before going out
in the rain to milk

the goat named Pennyroyal and feed rooster-less chickens. As they eat, I dare ask if life is worth

living without

a cock.

Their words are obscured behind busy beaks, like your father's, leaving me with nothing but the truth, the whole of it. The point

of complete

obscurity:

that the result of a pin prick is the same as the prick of a knife until you venture

to test depths, then, one result:

the medicinal benefits of acupuncture, and the other:

plain and simple death.

Nothing obscure about that.