

Don't Go Into the Library by Alberto Ríos

The library is dangerous—
Don't go in. If you do

You know what will happen.
It's like a pet store or a bakery—

Every single time you'll come out of there
Holding something in your arms.

Those novels with their big eyes.
And those no-nonsense, all muscle

Greyhounds and Dobermans,
All non-fiction and business,

Cuddly when they're young,
But then the first page is turned.

The doughnut scent of it all, *knowledge*,
The aroma of coffee being made

In all those books, something for everyone,
The deli offerings of civilization itself.

The library is the book of books,
Its concrete and wood and glass covers

Keeping within them the very big,
Very long story of everything.

The library is dangerous, full
Of answers. If you go inside,

You may not come out
The same person who went in.