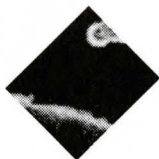
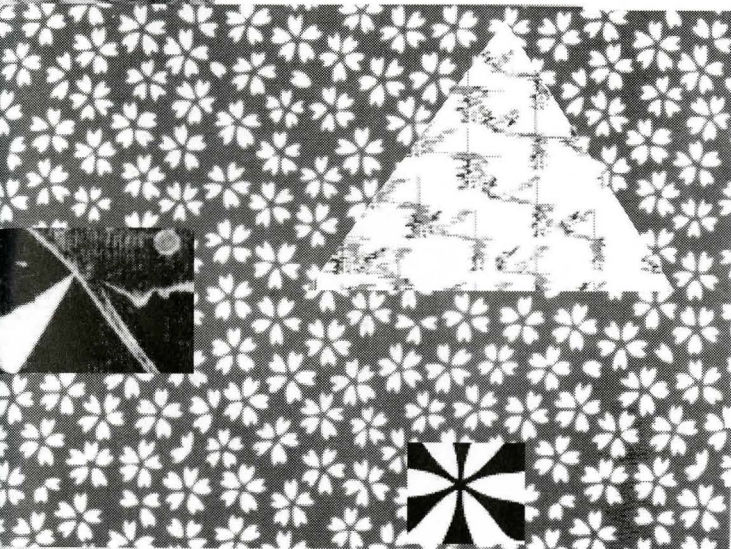
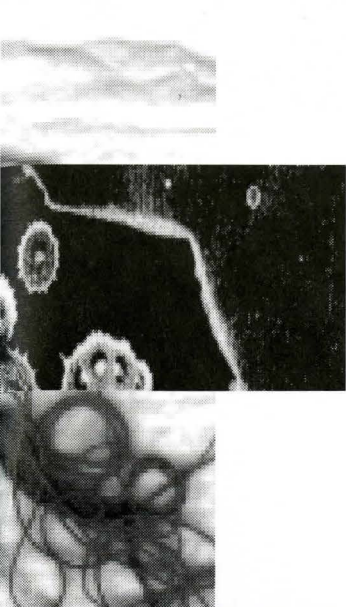


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Until further notice we will not be accepting fiction submissions. Submissions of poetry (3-5 poems) are welcomed from

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Manuscripts received at other times are returned unread. Manuscripts should be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. **No simultaneous submissions, please.**

Manuscripts are discussed with the writer's name masked so that beginning and established writers are read without prejudice.

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Jackie Bartley

WINTER

The birds must know
how the snow has lain
all night, having listened
to its tempest of crystals changing
form, moonlight sifting
all but blue from the dark.

No wonder they're absent in the early
hours when we wake longing for
the cacophony of song
that comes with summer's
morning light.

Now at the feeder: chickadees, nuthatches,
junkoes, the rowdy jays, one short woodpecker
ferreting seeds from the suet,

tempering the solitude of winter
though nothing can quiet its single
concomitant note: a blue note
indefinitely sustained.

Jackie Bartley

WAKING

"The successor of no number can be zero."

—Godel

A borrowed rain falls on slack lawns,
drooping tomato vines, limp roses.
We dream between drops, between
the lightning and the thunder.

I cup my hand to my ear, listen
to the pulse of the blood ocean,
try not to think of the working world,
of people and buildings and cities
moving as if movement proved their worth
like a clerk in a store with no customers
perpetually dusting shelves.

For now, it is important to memorize
the shapes of trees, to try to understand
what light is saying
so that, someday, when I must follow
the roots of those trees down
through the dark earth, past
stones that call my name,
I will know how to choose between
nothing and the darkness.

Jackie Bartley

NIGHT TIME

After John Carney's time-lapse nighttime photographs

This is how darkness sees itself
in the world with a single contingency
broken, where *what if* becomes
what is.

Light here does not divide
itself into color, but so thoroughly fills
the space and time it's given, no one feels
a loss. There are thousands of words
for every movement through time, but none
for color.

Humans here are smaller,
their eyes keener. Like fish, they do not blink.
In buildings tiny as doll houses they assemble
fine instruments to measure and record
the firmament. These elegant sensitive
instruments have, in fact, indicated
that light may be a living thing,
that sometimes under certain atmospheric
conditions, it approaches pure thought.
Then everyone comes out of their small houses,
the hair on their arms stands on end,
and the air hisses till it seems about to scream.

Jackie Bartley

THE GEOLOGIST IN THE FIELD

He follows a sheep trail
through mist laden green
to a cold stream crossing,
hugs the foothold over
water slick limestone,
has come to chip
and peer at a boundary of ages,
evidence of catastrophes so vast
whole seas of life vanished.

Sheep scatter at his passing,
watch from rain soaked ridges,
their quizzical stares the same
whether alarmed or quiescent.
Echo of pick and hammer,
sheep bleat, creek fall,
call of crow.

He retraces his
steps through steady rain, noticing
how blue borage glows in the meadows,
how poplars gather green from the stone
gray sky, how the day paints its own light
and nothing casts a shadow.

W. E. Butts

1954: TWO PARADES

Just home from Korea, a decorated war hero was leaning
toward the crowd, from the hotel's third floor,
and we heard the drum roll, marching band,
rifle-fire in the humid air, Mother and I,
while Father worked the late shift.

Didn't I know what war was,
times in the weeds I waited for the enemy?
Little Bobby lost an eye in one of those battles,
shot out by his own brother's pellet gun.
I remember, all these childhood years after,
his glass-marble stare seemed wrong,
and his brother's self-hatred.

That was the summer the daughter of the kind woman
who owned the dining car my mother washed dishes in
became Miss New York State, in a parade of lace
and lilacs, their petals the pale lavender
of a heart on the breast of a graceless uniform,
or the satin that ten years later would line my father's casket.
We all stood cheering on the street
to wave along the beauty we were not.

Martha Carlson-Bradley

ANOTHER COUNTRY

When the house is quiet
late at night, after a long enough time
of silence on the TV, the clocks
in separate rooms not quite
synchronized in their ticking,
the lamps burn a strange
warm light—and without intending to
you’ve suddenly arrived
in a different country,
where the rules of home and daylight
don’t apply. You take for granted
here how you can rise from your chair,
cross the room to the phone
and dial the dead one’s number—
and he’s glad to hear your voice,
that old friend, still thirty-five.
He tells you what he’s been reading lately,
what classics he’s watched on the VCR.
He’s started some new project
just like the old days, jazz rhythms
or entertainment law, the ethics
of medicine. Other things he’s not
allowed to talk about, too revealing
about the place you’re headed.
He won’t discuss his bike rides
for instance, that landscape
he sweats through, nor the animals
crossing the trail in the distance.
He’ll listen to you, though,
where you took your vacation,
what your two-year-old thought of the sea.
He’d love to meet your child
but he won’t say so, too well-schooled
in the etiquette of the dead,

Martha Carlson-Bradley/Another Country

wary of any untoward implications
since the living are so nervous,
superstitious really: he understands:
he remembers: that flicker
in the pit of the stomach
when the bright afternoon clouded over
briefly, unexpectedly, his lover
in shadow and his own arms
alien, ugly with gooseflesh.

Michael Carrino

ADVICE

I hurl my advice in everyone's face.
Huge ironies stalk the shaded
forest of daydream, the dim
hallway of doubt.

Most of us live
overwhelmed or ignored
as everyone

dissolves into a suspect,
an accomplice
urging us back to ash.

So I toss around
what I believe
I might know, rarely
preface or qualify

as we waste
effort and attention, obscure
and dissatisfied,

that villain in the dark,
only one footfall behind.

You want some advice?

Don't panic, shift your balance,
behave yourself . . . or don't.

Dina Coe

BREAKING LOOSE

The last patch of sunlight scatters.
The dog pushes herself up from the cold grass.
Too old and stiff to have to be tied anymore,
she wanders to the woodline and stands.
For a moment, the pale hairs of her muzzle
or maybe one of the few hanging leaves
catch the light that remains.
Then she's gone, exuberantly baying.
Inside the broken trees,
the last-leafed maples shed their own
yellow light, as if the sun is still setting
in this interior bustling with delicate noise,
with small snaps and tearings. Breaking away,
she heard their calls echoing, then the silence
when they knew she was free. She took pleasure
even in the new routines, like any fugitive, or stray
trusted to behave out of gratitude,
taking an unhampered stroll past the housewives
and around the grass triangle and home, or
going out to lie in the autumn sunlight, no rope
to hinder it from following the patches
shifting in the yard. Until the last one
disperses in cool blades, and the self breaks through
its own restraint and runs for its old life.

Nancy Cohen

PERSEID SHOWER

Some truths are hard to hold. That we race
through space, this planet, that we fly anywhere, that's one.
So that seeing these trails of light skate across
the sky, severing familiar constellations,
I am willing to believe anything but that we are rushing
into this, hurling ourselves on it, not it on us.
How still and cold the night sky seemed once,
its motions only two: a velvety shiver
and a slow predictable rotation.
When, loving an astronomer, I straddled a roof
and leaned back so he could guide the telescope
of my face to the right degree,
the stars blazed, it's true, but distantly.
Now, these quick letters from the galaxy
pierce my quiet: each seems almost to laugh or shout
as it flames and flickers out.
Or is that laughter from behind me? No one's there.

Rafaella Del Bourgo

MUSCLE BEACH

Dot stretched her neck up to see better as her father slowed, then stopped the car at the gritty curb. He lit a cigarette, and put both hands on the steering wheel. He was looking straight ahead at the very blue sky. The smoke rose to the top of the car and swirled briefly before becoming invisible. Dot wondered where the smoke went and what happened to it after you couldn't see it anymore.

"I have a new girlfriend," he said.

"Daddy, you're silly, you told me that," she said.

"No, this is a new new one. Really. Her name is Blockbuh-guard."

Dot sighed. "You always have a new girlfriend."

Her father nodded slowly, watching the immobile palm trees as if they could reveal secret and meaningful information.

Dot grew impatient, tossing her head from side to side.

"Okay, Daddy, what's she like?"

"She's not very pretty." His voice, lacking its usual vitality, seemed to curl lazily up the windshield with the cigarette smoke. "Her hair is quite thin and it's a mousey color. She's almost as short as you and weighs three hundred pounds, and is kind of mean. I saw her growl at a small dog yesterday."

"You did not."

"Yes, really, I did."

Dot sat on her folded legs. "What else?"

"She's not real smart, either, and has a terrible job that she hates."

"What does she do?"

"She makes dolls out of banana peels. Kind of a slippery job." He blew on the glowing cigarette end.

"She does not."

"Yes, she does, and oh, her voice sounds like dumping tin cans down a garbage chute." He shrugged and looked at her, waiting.

She sucked on a lock of hair until it was wet and pointy.

Rafaella Del Bourgo/**Muscle Beach**

"Okay, Daddy, so why are you going out with her?"

"Well, you know, the funny thing is, she makes the best damned oatmeal." He took a drag on the cigarette and looked at her. "You're not laughing. You always laugh when I tell you that."

Dot pulled the pieces of wet hair apart and brushed them away from her face. "I guess."

Her father put the cigarette out in the ashtray which he then pushed back in. He waved the residual smoke away with his hand. "Come on, honey, it'll be all right. Really. Remember? We talked about it?"

"Yeah, I guess."

He put his hand on her bare leg. "I've got to go," he said as he leaned over to open the heavy door. He kissed the top of her head and then patted the fine black hair back into place. She watched him start to say something else, and then just shake his head, and she scooted across the seat and out. Using both hands she pushed hard and after the slam he drove away. Dot blinked against the brightness, and fluffed the ruffles of her new red bathing suit. He had chosen a place neither of them could miss or forget—the weight lifting area at Muscle Beach in Venice. When he drove off, she wasn't exactly scared, but didn't know where to go or what to do.

With effort, she carried her belongings to the area where the "muscle men" lifted the weights outside. It was roped off, and she was very careful not to get too close to the purple colored cord. She wondered who would be brave enough to just cross that line into their world. She neatly laid her towel next to the rope, and stacked the Minnie Mouse lunch box, daisy sandals, and red plastic coin purse with two quarters on a corner where she could guard them.

For a long time she just sat and watched the men working out. She thought they would be mean and maybe chase her away if they noticed her, but after an hour or so, three of them looked at her and then smiled. All of them were in their early 20's: one was dark, the other two blonde. The dark one came over, squatted down and said hi.

Rafaella Del Bourgo/Muscle Beach

"My name's Alex. Are your parents here?"

Dot shook her head.

"Are you going to be alone for awhile?"

"Yes, sir."

He grinned, showing large and even white teeth. "Maybe we can play later."

Dot looked at his body. His arms and legs were divided into ropey parts like the cord around the weight lifting area, but when he talked to her he seemed really nice, and smelled good—hot and coconutty. She closed her eyes against the glare and said, "Okay."

He went back and she saw that he was lifting weights with his two friends who had yellow curls like Gorgeous George, the wrestler on TV. She had a doll with curls like that but it was a girl. The guys helped each other and said, "Doin' good. That's it, doin' great." She liked the grunty noises they made when they lifted or pushed up the bar, and the "BOING!" sound the bar made as it fell back into the metal stands that held it. When Alex lifted and then released the bar, Dot made her mouth into a "Boing" sound, too. Alex and his two friends talked for awhile and then they left. Some others were still working out there, but suddenly Dot felt very lonely.

She built a sand wall around her towel. She imagined that it would protect her towel, lunch, shoes and money. The sand was hot and dry so it kept sliding away, but she got a pretty good wall, about as high as her hand. Wrinkling her nose, she put all the cigarette butts in a pile, and then covered them with sand. The four shells she found while working, she used to decorate the four corners.

Now that her fortress was built, she turned and saw four teenagers on a huge yellow blanket, and watched them while she ate the lunch Daddy had packed for her that morning. Her tummy growled. It still felt funny from last night when she and Daddy had each eaten a pound of candy while watching "The Cocoon" on TV. As usual, he had fallen asleep and was snoring. When the cocoon started shaking and splitting, and the monster began to push out, Dot knew that the scientist's pretty daughter

Rafaella Del Bourgo/Muscle Beach

was in awful trouble, but she was so frightened she couldn't cross the room to turn off the television. She sat at the far end of the couch, her father's stockinged feet pushing up against her, and covered her face with a pillow during the really scary parts. She woke up the next morning in bed and Daddy said to her, "Great movie, huh, honey?"

Then he had tried to explain important things as he made the peanut butter and jelly sandwich, cut up and took the seedy part out of the apple, and tucked in the potato chips and milk. She listened as she watched him wrap the napkin around the milk carton. That was a dumb idea because the napkin got all soggy later.

The teenagers were pretty and handsome like kids in the Coke commercials, and they were listening to loud music on the radio and were kidding around and laughing. The two girls sat together with the boys on the outside. One girl was reading a magazine and the other was busy looking at people as they trudged past through the deep, soft sand. The teenaged girls seemed nice to her, like her babysitters, and it made her feel good that they were there. Then the boys picked up a volley ball and walked away, and the party was diminished. The two girls watched the boys move toward the volleyball courts, but they didn't get up to follow. The skinny girl saw Dot staring at them and came over to the towel.

"Hi," she said. "I'm Joan. What's your name?"

Dot fixed the ruffles of her bathing suit. "Dorothy Davis Selfridge." Her voice was low, singsong. She looked up and pointed to where Joan's foot was. "You stepped on my wall," she said.

Joan sat in the sand and fixed the smashed place. "I'm sorry. Is that all better now?"

Dot nodded.

"Your name's awfully long."

"Nobody calls me that."

"Do they call you Dorothy?"

"Dot. They only call me Dot."

"Dot? Why that's just perfect isn't it? You're just a little dot

Rafaella Del Bourgo/Muscle Beach

of a person on a little square of a towel on a great big beach in a big, big city. What do you think about that?"

"I don't know."

Joan looked at Dot's possessions stacked up on the towel.

"You're very neat, aren't you?"

"Mama makes me clean up my room."

"Oh," Joan said, watching her friend on the yellow blanket.

"Where's your Mama now?"

"I don't know," Dot told her. "Maybe at home."

"Are you going to be alone all day?" she asked.

"Daddy said so."

"I see," she said and went back to her blanket. "I told you so," she said to the fatter girl. "He's been gone over an hour."

"Probably went for drinks," the fatter one said. She was filing her nails.

"Drinks?" Joan said, "It doesn't take an hour to get some drinks. I think he's not going to come back." She put both hands up to her mouth. "My God, what if he doesn't come back?"

"Don't be so melodramatic and, Jesus, lower your voice," the fatter girl said looking over at Dot, "she can hear everything we say."

Alex came up to the wall. He said, "Still here?" and he smiled and Dot smiled. He asked her, "What's your name?"

She squinted at him and wondered why he didn't know. She had just told Joan. "Dot," she said with some exasperation.

"Well, Dot, do you want to go into the water with me?" She did want to, but didn't know if she was supposed to. The sun had made her dizzy and she couldn't remember the Beachdos and Beachdon'ts Daddy had talked about. She looked at the sand wall.

"It'll be fun. Come on, you must be burning up."

Dot repaired a place in the wall where the sand had sifted down.

"It'll be okay," Alex said, pinching her toe.

As they walked down the sand. Dot's feet were so hot she ran a little and then jumped up and down in one place. When she got to the damp part she stopped to wait for him, and saw

Rafaella Del Bourgo/Muscle Beach

Joan and her friend from the yellow blanket. They looked at Alex and Dot and at each other. They talked and the fatter one said, "Don't be stupid. It's just not our business."

Joan said to her, "Are you okay?" and Dot pointed at Alex. "Oh, great," Joan said, making a prune face. As they walked toward their blanket Joan hunched over and made her voice crackle and rancid. "Hello, little girl," she gurgled to no one in particular, "would you like to play with my dolly?"

Her friend swatted her arm. "Stop it, you're being stupid."

Dot watched the two girls and wondered where Joan was keeping her dolly. Maybe she could play with it later.

In the water Alex was fun. He and Dot jumped the waves and he stayed near her and didn't go swimming out in the deep water where she wasn't allowed to go. Sometimes a big wave came and it scared her, but she'd run closer to the beach and then the wave would just splash around her thighs and knees and she'd make a squeaking sound if it pushed her down, but she was near the shore, and felt safe. Then Alex picked her up and took her further out into deep water, holding her up when the swells came. "Can you swim?" he asked.

Dot shook her head, "Uh unh. Daddy tried to teach me once. He said it's good to know how to swim."

"How did he teach you?" Alex asked.

"He threw me into the deep end of a pool."

"Oh," Alex said in a surprised voice. "Did you swim?"

"No, I was on the bottom until a neighbor saved me."

"Oh," Alex said again, this time not sounding so surprised. "Strange technique." Then he said, "I'll teach you and you won't be scared or swallow any water," and put his arms underneath her so she was floating on them. He taught her to kick, and do the crawl motion with her arms. It was really easy, and Daddy would be happy she was learning.

"Let's play dolphin," Alex said. "You get on my back and hold on around my neck and I'll swim with you? okay?"

Dot looked for Joan, but didn't see her. "Okay."

He turned around and put her arms around his neck. "Hold on," he said, "we're going through the breakers. Don't let go."

Rafaella Del Bourgo/Muscle Beach

Dot held on really tight, but the wave wasn't too big and then they were on the other side of the waves where she wasn't allowed to go. It was flatter there and quieter, but all the people were closer to the beach. She tightened her grip on Alex's neck, and tried to look over his shoulder.

"Look at how funny these people are," he told her as he dog paddled parallel with the shore. "All this big ocean here with lots of room and they all crowd there together right near the beach. You don't always have to do what everyone else does, you know. Sometimes if you do what you want to do, you'll find you have more elbow room."

Dot looked at his elbows floating on the surface of the water.

"Daddy says being like everyone else is boring. Like being dead. He says they're lemons and all want to do the same thing. One does something and then all the other lemons want to do it, too."

"Lemons?" Alex asked.

"That's what Daddy said." She started to shiver although her front was warmed by his skin. He swam back through the waves and they were on the beach side again. He pulled her off his back and held her close to his massive chest. She wrapped her arms around his neck. Then he said, "Hey, your lips are blue. We better get out of the water. Do you want to walk or be carried?"

"Walk," she said, and he set her on her feet. A large wave came and knocked her down and she swallowed some salty water and was scared. She stood up, coughing so hard tears were forced into her eyes.

"It's okay," he said, thumping her back until she started to breathe more normally, and then he put out his hand. "Come on."

She tried to look into his face, but the sun whited her eyes. She could only see his legs and that the oil on them made the water beady-looking like the water didn't really touch his skin at all because the oil was so thick and it covered and protected him. She put her hand in his, and was glad it was not oily. He held hers just right—not too squeezy hard like some grownups did.

Rafaella Del Bourgo/Muscle Beach

When they got back to the muscle man area, they saw Alex's two friends up on this big, canvas-covered stage. They were doing tricks like walking on their hands, and doing somersaults, and jumping over each other. Alex asked her if she wanted to be an acrobat and she said, "Yes!" forgetting all about being in the water and being cold.

He took her up on the padded stage and she watched them as they took turns wiping the oil off with a white towel. Now they didn't look so shiny, but they still smelled of coconut. The other two, Steve and Mike (the ones with the blond hair) were brothers; they were also heavily muscled. She had never seen men with bodies like these and she wanted to poke her fingers at the bulging muscles and run her hand along the valleys between them. She thought somehow that she shouldn't, though, and so she didn't. When Alex introduced her to the other men they very formally shook her pudgy little hand.

First they taught her to curl up like a ball, with her head tucked between her knees and her hands grasping her lower legs. They talked to her, reminding her not to break the position, as they threw her one to the other and caught her. Then Alex bent over and Steve and Mike put her on his neck, steadying her as she rolled down just right, so she landed on her feet. She and Alex ended up back to back. She bent over, sliding her hands between his legs. He grabbed her wrists, pulled her through and up into the air where he then released her arms and caught her by the torso. Dot threw back her head and squealed.

They taught her to arch her back, arms out, right pointed foot touching left knee as she fell backward to be caught by Mike who threw her to Steve who threw her to Alex. Each one would catch her at the small of her back and spin her before tossing her off. The spinning made her a little woozy, but she loved the feeling of flying.

They showed her how to stand rigid, hands on her hips, as Steve held her feet in one hand. Then she would fall backward and Mike would catch her at her left elbow and left knee, swinging her around in a swooping arc.

They told her that if she did what they said and stayed

Rafaella Del Bourgo/Muscle Beach

STIFF she wouldn't get hurt.

They practiced "the pyramid." Alex and Mike stood next to each other and Steve stepped up on their bended legs and then onto their shoulders as he turned so he could face front. Then Dot came close and put her back to the men, and Alex threw her straight up in the air, fast!, and Steve caught her at the waist and then put her up on his shoulders. "I'm very tall," she yelled, "the tippy-toppy one."

From up there, she could see the whole crowded beach, and her attention was drawn to Joan who was yelling at someone down by the water. She was waving her arms and yelling quite loud. "All day? . . . Are you crazy? She's just a baby! If I hadn't been watching out for her . . . You were working? ought to be ashamed of yourself! . . . time I'll call the police."

Dot looked around for some policemen and to see what Joan was yelling about, but she couldn't see anything except the normal summer Saturday beach crush. As she was leaning forward in an attempt to see better, she fell off Steve's shoulders. He tried to catch her, missed, and fell too. As she got very near to hitting the canvas, Alex caught her, his hands around her right shoulder and left thigh.

"Ow," she screamed when he put her on her feet, "you hurt me," and she swung her arm and punched Alex in his unyielding stomach.

Steve and Mike laughed. "She's got spunk," Mike said.

"I'm sorry, Dot," Alex said as he squatted down. "I didn't mean to grab you so hard, but I was afraid you'd hit the canvas and really hurt yourself. Do you forgive me?"

She glanced at Mike who said, "We're all sorry. It was an accident. You're our team-mate. We wouldn't hurt you on purpose."

Steve nodded, his curls bobbing.

"Friends?" Alex asked, putting out his hand.

Dot shook it as she said, "Okay."

They practiced their 'closing'—Dot in the middle, all holding hands—step, step, bow. Then, back, back, bow. It was as they were practicing back, back, bow that she saw her father. He was

Rafaella Del Bourgo/Muscle Beach

carrying her sandals, towel, lunch box, and coin purse with the two quarters still in it, and his head was turning around really fast as he called her name. "Dot? Dottie?"

She grinned at Mike, Steve and Alex, shouted, "It's him! It's him!" and stumbled down the canvas-covered steps to her father who stared up at the three giants and then bent his head down. He picked her up and it seemed to her his eyes were wettish behind his thick glasses. "Oh, honey," he said.

"Don't be sad, Daddy," she told him, "I'm an acrobat!"

But as he lifted her, Dot could see that Joan was standing behind them. "Hi," she said to the older girl, whose mouth was quite small and pinched and who was looking at Daddy like she was really angry. When Dot saw this, she got scared because she thought maybe he was the one Joan was yelling at before. She started to cry, and the beach and the men became a haze. Daddy put his hand against her face, wiping the tears and then stroking her hair. She slumped against him, lay her head on his chest.

"Don't cry, don't cry," he said and his voice was velvety. "Next Saturday, we'll both come to the beach. I'll come with you. Okay?" He turned around, facing Joan. "I'll quit my week end job."

"But you said you needed the money really bad," she reminded him in a tiny voice.

"Well, I did some figuring and. . . Not this bad," he said. "Not so very bad."

"Can I still be an acrobat?"

He wiped his eyes under the glasses with his wrist. "Yes. And we'll play in the water and build sand castles and look for shells. And I'll tell you about my new girlfriend."

"Bluebahguard?" Dot asked. Her eyes were closing and she tried to keep them open.

"Oh, no," he said. "I broke up with her. I have a new girlfriend now."

Slowly, Dot moved so she could look at his face. "Can she come to the beach with us?" she asked, her voice sleepy.

"Well, I don't know. She's a hundred years old, and doesn't like the sand or water very much," he said.

Rafaella Del Bourgo/**Muscle Beach**

"Oh. Is she mean and ugly?" Dot asked.

"I'm afraid she is."

"Is she so mean that she bit a birdy yesterday?"

"Why, yes, I'm ashamed to say. Do you know her?"

Dot managed a little giggle. "But, does she make really good oatmeal?"

"Yes, how could you tell? Oh, you're a very clever girl."

"Daddy," she murmured, laying her head on his shoulder again, "you're a silly billy."

"I suspect so," was all he said.

The child was so tired, she could barely see Joan who walked back to the big yellow blanket and stood next to her girlfriend with her arms crossed over her chest, watching as the short, large-bellied man shuffled through the sand with his burden. Dot, although almost asleep, her damp mouth open and black eyes closed, could feel the Minnie Mouse lunch box softly thumping against her leg. In the fall, Dorothy Davis Selfridge and the lunch box would be going into the first grade.

Carie Etter

AFTER THE WEEK OF ARGUMENTS

We walk in a fine
mist after the
long dinner.

You gaze out over the ocean,
at the ebb
of the tide. Tomorrow

we will
share ordinary
conversation. Now

the necessity of silence,
to let the rise
of each dark wave

fall. I
turn aside,
walking slowly,

watching the teenage couple
kiss and hesitate,
the outer world no greater than

the mist wet in the girl's black hair.
A homeless man passes,
swinging his empty

bottle like a scythe.
You join me
on the lit path, our

Carrie Etter/After the Week of Arguments

heads bent forward, our
shadows
barely touching.

Carrie Etter

THE LONG WINTER

November. Tufts of pale brown
grass poke through the snow
like ground squirrels.

All the leaves have been burned.

My sister has begun her hibernation:
no school, no song.
The sparrows have flown south.

The home tutor arrives like a nun:
all wordless smiles and terrible benevolence.
She should stop asking how the arthritis is.

She must ignore the slow, stiff walk.
I stoke the blazing fire.
I sing Christmas carols.

I watch my sister grin on the telethons.
The merciless wind. The merciless wind.
I make no promises.

Rod Kessler

SELF-PORTRAIT WITH TREE

The sycamore just off
from the center of things
in Sunderland, with its canopy broad enough
to take in all of Route 47 and a considerable
swath of lawn—

It would take three of me,
hand to hand and hand to hand again
to engirdle that trunk. How I'd like that,
all three of me.

Allison Joseph

SUPERMERCADO

The t.v. ads thunder "tops en el Bronx!",
so my father and I make a pact,
set out in our pursuit of fruit
to a warehouse turned supermarket
with sawdust on the floors and crates
cracked open in the aisles,
more abundance here than in scanty
neighborhood stores, so much
to pick through, mull over:
peaches so ripe in their blushing
fuzzy skins we are tempted
to munch them right there,
juice seeping down our chins
like water seeping into earth.
Here we are brown people unashamed
to love watermelon, stereotypes giving way
when we see that red-pink flesh
that we know is juicier than any kiss,
welcoming even the unobtrusive seeds
that will slip subtly from our mouths.
My father hands me three plastic bags,
pushes me toward mounds
of lemons, limes, tangerines,
chiding me to find the best ones,
unblemished, almost ready,
globes of yellow and orange,
each one a world I admire,
feeling its nubby skin just moments
before I tuck it in the right bag.
Why have mere grapes when
mangoes beckon, when we can taste
the extravagance beneath
their green-going-yellow-going-red skins,
when we can imagine mango pulp—

Allison Joseph/Supermercado

sweet and tart and light on our tongues.
Apples are too ordinary for us
when here we can buy huge coconuts
we'll later crack open, sip cool
sugary water from, when we can indulge
in pineapple, kiwi, pomegranate,
fruit congregating in our basket,
and then in the car, bounty
in our rusted Chevy, in all
the not so sleek cars of our city
carrying away this fruit,
plump flesh enfolding pits,
tang singing beneath rinds.

Nancy Krim

IN THIS STRANGE ROOM

Change is coming to the light-starved river,
dreaming its ice-laden dreams.
In her dreams she's constantly checking clocks,
losing keys, stumbling through strange rooms
in familiar space: her kitchen a theater-in-the-round,
her porch an abandoned heliport.
She drifts exhausted, half-awake,
too tired to throw off the covers at five,
drag downstairs to face the blank page,
can't sing herself to safety or oblivion,
watch the day glow into itself through trees;
too much early morning lurking, immovable,
as change comes slinking around the corner,
leers over the empty planter, hides beneath wings
of the cricket who has hitched a ride inside on the geranium,
chirps now in the dark of the den,
calling out for company or at least some explanation
for the lack of wind here, the artificial light,
the hissing of unfamiliar heat,
in this strange room
she has somehow dreamed herself inside.

Nancy Krim

CICADA'S WING

It's September and they've gone quiet
in crevices of maple bark, or gone
to feed grackles and jays, leaving behind
a leg, an antenna, a piece of wing,
brittle larval casings shed in rapture, mid-July,
rising up to join a wave of communal chanting,
ribbon of sound expanding
then suddenly ceasing,
then again rising—
to cut-off, mid-crescendo.

It shines, torn remnant—translucens,
iridesces, this thing that flew.
You can see through it
as if looking out through leaded glass:
a design stenciled on leaf, fence, sky. . .
and then it flies up off your fingertip,
lands in withering lilies-of-the-valley
that return on their own every year,
each year more numerous,
like cicadas,
as if there'd never been September,
as if they'd never had to die.

Stephanie Levin

FOREKNOWLEDGE

She must have known she would die that night.
Sitting in the passenger's seat in the Mercedes convertible,
my father at the wheel, she had to have seen
how tired he was after driving all day
on their way back from North Carolina.
She must have been used to his speeding; the unpaid tickets
stacked in the glove compartment above her knees.

It must have been resignation when she unfastened her seat belt
and leaned her seat back. She must have been ready to be taken.
With the sunroof down, night wind in her hair that never made it
past her ear lobes, it must have felt like flying,
wheels barely touching the winding country road.
And while she slept, she must have thought it was a dream:
the car nosing off the side of the road,
the sudden smack when they hit the tree,
her own body lifted from the seat,
out of the top of the car, into the night,
as if delivered.

Alyce Miller

LIVING ON THE WEST COAST

Without the seasons keeping count
of where we are and where we've been
I find myself forgetting.
Days telescope into weeks and years.
Spring wears the same fabric as fall.
Faint memories of snow against the pane—all gone.
Heat no longer tips off birthdays and summer.
Nothing clocks the passage of time
the way the smell of clean sheets once signaled Sunday.
If I leave my watch behind
I cannot tell the morning from the night.
This may be why, when driving,
I can't distinguish north and south,
and when I head toward where the ocean should be
I find myself inland, roads unmarked,
and loops of freeway spiraling
upwards to an unknown destination.
No matter where I travel
I keep ending up here,
on the edge of the world,
a mistake I now take for granted.

Alyce Miller

NAMING THINGS

"Apple!" says the baby of the badly drawn bell,
pudgy finger stabbing at the page
of the alphabet book. You agree
because it's much simpler that way.

"Apple," you repeat dutifully,
hating yourself for the lie
and all the other lies you've been party to.
The baby smiles, pleased with himself

the way your lover smiled when you said
you hadn't, and no, you never would.
The baby flips the pages backwards.
"Monkey!" he cries, spitting at the ape.

Half-heartedly, you parrot "Monkey,"
wondering what he'll think of you
when he grows up and learns the difference.
The ape's face is not so unlike your own.

Eyes, nose, mouth, ears. There are places
in the world where a live monkey
is screwed by the head to a table
and his fresh brains are spooned out and eaten

You want to tell the baby the truth
about the monkey,
about pain and death and
the awful ways two people can hurt each other,

Alyce Miller/Naming Things

but already he has flicked a handful of pages
and arrived at zebra. "Hmmm," says the baby.
"Horsie." He is not your baby.
But that is another story.

Jenny van Mill

WALKING SNAPPER

You really notice the stars when you live in the country. Walking Snapper in the field behind the house I can look up and see the whole sky and the stars in their formations. It's like being in a planetarium—everything's laid out so clearly. I wish I knew the names of the constellations—I know only the big dipper, which looks more like a kite with a tail to me, unless I'm looking at the wrong group of stars. Sometimes, Snapper comes to a full stop and cannot be moved. I think he goes into a sort of trance. I could drag him—I'm stonger than he is now—but I don't want to strip him of his remaining dignity. He is a bull terrier after all. So while he stands with his feet planted, I look at the stars. I talk to him too. He can't hear or see—he's 15 years old—so I suppose I'm talking to myself, just to hear certain things said out loud. Tonight, when he went into one of his rigid moments, I said, "We might have to move away from here, boy. We might have to get a little house of our own in town." He took it very well, sniffed the grass and started walking again. He might be deaf and blind, but his sense of smell is acute. I think that's why he likes being here in the country—it's opened up a whole new world to his nose. But he doesn't really care where he is as long as he's with me. He decided long ago that he was mine. Dogs do that—they pick their owner. He wasn't supposed to be mine. Thomas was the one who saw the movie "Patton" and fell in love with the general's bull terrier. And then the next thing I knew we were poring over "Dog World" magazines to find a breeding kennel. We found one near Atlanta, called "Windermere," and the woman I spoke to on the phone had an English voice very much like mine. They were from the Lake District, she said, and had been in the States for eight years. And they just happened to have a new litter of puppies. A photograph came—eight identical sleeping puppies, except that one was distinguished by a hand-drawn arrow. Snapper. He wasn't Snapper then, of course—he was Windermere's Arrow Wood, and came with a pedigree that documented his very

Jenny van Mill/*Walking Snapper*

impressive lineage. I did a lot of crazy things when I was first divorced, but that was one of the craziest: to spend \$350 (plus another \$150 for the plane fare) on a dog. But I did it because I was so grateful for the miracle: Thomas had come back home and he didn't hate me any more and we were a real mother and son, buying a family dog. We went to the airport together to pick him up. He was in the freight area in his cage, pure white except for his red leather collar and the black triangle at the end of his incredibly long nose. The tips of his ears flopped over. When he was older they would stand up and he would look fierce and noble, and not-to-be-reckoned-with. But when I saw him at the airport all my fears about owning a bull terrier vanished. He looked comical and sweet. On the way home, I looked in the rearview mirror and he was licking Thomas's face and Thomas was talking to him in the soft voice one uses for babies and I knew that he would be able to pour out on the puppy the affection he seemed unable to give to anyone else. That's how important Snapper was. Neil doesn't understand any of this.

I don't like the turkey vultures. In the early morning, before it's really light, when I walk Snapper down to the road to collect the newspaper, they're up there roosting in the big oaks at the end of the driveway. The feathers that drop onto the driveway are huge, the kind you could dip into an ink pot. When we're right under the trees, they take to the air and the noise they make sounds heavy and leathery and I can't help thinking of du Maurier's "The Birds." I've been reading "The Inferno," too, so I also think of Dante's three-faced Satan, flapping his great wings at the very center of hell. I wonder if they're waiting for Snapper. Often, when we walk in the field, they're up there circling. I wave my arms. "Go away, we're still alive!" They're not all turkey vultures, Neil says. The ones with the short tails are black vultures. Neil knows all about birds. I think he likes the tidiness of them. He told me once that the feces of the young birds come in little packets and that the parents carry the packets

Jenny van Mill / **Walking Snapper**

out of the nest. I think Neil also likes birds because you can enjoy them from a distance: you don't have to feed them or clean up after them or watch them get old. I wonder if they do get old. I've never seen a bird flapping wearily or falling out of the sky. Perhaps they just tidily die before old age sets in. Snapper is not dying tidily. In his senility, he has forgotten that he's supposed to defecate outside. We've erected barricades to confine him to the kitchen and during the day, while we're at work, he stays in the garage. Neil bought this house six months ago. When we first moved in, I thought Snapper would fight the barricades, ram them with his head the way he would have done when he was younger, but he seemed to accept them as part of the new house.

I get up first every morning to clean up the mess. Neil can't face it. It makes him shudder. He's a urologist, but his research involves only cell interactions—nothing nasty. He's never had children and he's never had a dog. I can't blame him for either. But I don't understand his lack of compassion. He's a kind, gentle person but he won't even call Snapper by name: he calls him the animal, or the stupid thing, or Shitter. Every few weeks the tension becomes unbearable. Neil usually gets home from work before I do and today I could feel the tension as soon as I walked into house. He was quiet all through dinner and then he suddenly said, "It was so disgusting today. I came home and opened the garage door and the stupid thing had shit all over the place and then walked in it."

"He gets confused—he's senile. And he can't see."

"Well, he could smell it," he said. "I could smell it well enough."

"I don't expect you to clean up after him. He's my dog—just leave it for me."

"I have to clean it if I want to go in the garage. It makes me sick."

"Well, don't go in the garage then. Wait till I get home. He's got to stay somewhere during the day. We knew he was going to

Jenny van Mill/ **Walking Snapper**

mess up the garage. We talked about it before we ever moved out here. I don't know what else I can do except take him away. I'll get a little house in town. He doesn't bother me. I love him." By then I was crying. "I don't mind a little dog shit. Compared to some of the things I've dealt with in my life . . ."

The field is bordered by woods on every side. At night, the tops of the trees make a black uneven fringe against the sky. The sky itself is never black—it's various shades of luminous grey, depending on the phases of the moon and the absence or presence of clouds and other meteorological events I know nothing about. I love the night sky. "Slowly, silently, now the moon walks the night in her silver shoon . . ." I can almost tell the time now by the position of the moon. Tonight the air is clear and frosty. The stars are neon-bright, and you feel that if you could stay out here long enough, breathing that cold clean air, you would be purified. But I can't resist the warmth of the house. Through the windows I can see the fireplace and the bookcases and Neil sitting on the sofa and I get impatient and want Snapper to hurry up so I can get back inside. Sensing my impatience, he sits down to scratch. Snapper wasn't designed for Florida living. He has a chronic skin condition which plagues him even in winter, despite the ministrations of a dog dermatologist. I scrub him with a special shampoo once a week, but even so he's scabby and smelly. He really is a horrible unsavory old dog. I admit that to Neil. I know what he is but I still love him. I wish I didn't always cry. I try not to because Neil can't stand it—he's immediately contrite and promises never to mention the Snapper situation again. He will though, in a few weeks.

Tonight, after I cried, he said "Forgive me. I shouldn't have said anything. I just have to remember that it won't be forever."

"You can't help it. And anyway, it isn't fair, the way he's messing up your house."

"Our house," he said. "I'll never say another word. I promise. What else can I do?"

"Love Snapper." I was asking the impossible. "Say, 'Poor old dog' or something. Don't you feel sorry for him at all? Don't you feel anything but revulsion?"

Jenny van Mill/Walking Snapper

Neil patted my hand. "Of course I'm sorry. He doesn't have much of a life. He still knows you, but I don't think he's aware of much else."

"You think I should put him to sleep." I took my hand away.

"I've never said that. I've never suggested that."

"Well, don't. Old age is nasty but you can't just kill people to be rid of the mess. I'm not so young myself. When are you going to have me bumped off?"

Neil smiled patiently.

I'm 58, nine years older than Neil. Sometimes it feels like nine light-years. I am tired—tired of the anxiety, of Neil's disgust, of Snapper's smell. Many mornings Snapper is still asleep when I go out to the kitchen. I always lean down to check his breathing, and sometimes I think I half hope to find him dead. I don't admit that to Neil. I barely admit it to myself.

I can't say I sensed that something was wrong on Monday evening. I sensed nothing. Work had been tiring and when I turned into the driveway I was trying to decide whether to go to choir practice or not. I didn't get out of the car to lock the gate behind me; that way I thought I might possibly make the effort to go. Even when I walked into the house I had no misgivings. Neil was in the kitchen, as always, preparing dinner. He turned away from the stove to kiss me.

"Leftover spaghetti," he said, and then almost as an afterthought, "I don't think Snapper's doing too well." He had called him Snapper.

Snapper was in the garage, panting heavily, turning in small circles, barely able to stand, his hindquarters hunched under him. I carried him into the kitchen. "Why didn't you bring him in? How could you leave him out there in this condition?"

"I did. I did bring him in. He tried to eat but he couldn't stand up. He wanted to go out. He was sniffing at the door."

I put Snapper on his blanket and sat on the floor with him but he couldn't settle down. He just kept moving about the kitchen, bumping into the wall and the cabinets, turning and

Jenny van Mill/Walking Snapper

turning. It was six o'clock and when I called the vet there was only an answering machine that referred me to the Emergency Animal Clinic. I called Thomas. "I'll meet you there," he said.

The vet at the Emergency Animal Clinic was very young. He said Snapper was dehydrated and in distress and had a skin condition. He offered to do a blood workup to see what was going on. I declined. I thought I knew what was going on. He also said that euthanasia was an option to be considered. I started crying and carried Snapper outside. Thomas was there. We took Snapper to a strip of grass and watched him stumble about. Thomas cries very quietly. It was almost dark and I wouldn't have known he was crying except for the occasional lifting of his hand to his face. "Let's not have these people do it," he said.

I was at our own vet when they opened on Tuesday morning. They would like to keep Snapper for observation, Dr. Gold said. They would call me at work later. I didn't go straight to work. I went to Lisa's house, had a cup of coffee and called the office to say I'd be late. Then I made the beds, put away Anna's toys, and did the dishes. I used to do this often when I had my own house and lived only a mile away. It seems I'm less of a mother and a grandmother since I sold my house and moved out to the country with Neil. I left a note on the refrigerator to let Lisa know about Snapper, even though she's never been overly fond of him. Anna is five and finds Snapper both fascinating and disgusting. She likes to watch him have his weekly bath. "Why does Snapper smell so bad, Grandma?" "Because he has a skin problem and he's very old. In people years he's about a hundred." "You're not a hundred, Grandma." "Not quite." I got to work at 10 o'clock. The vet called almost immediately. Snapper had suffered severe neurological damage; there was no hope for recovery. A year ago I had said "You'll have to tell me when it's time to let him go. I'll never be able to make the decision on my own." "It's time," the vet said. "I'm sorry, but it's time."

Jenny van Mill/Walking Snapper

Neil brought flowers home in the afternoon. I was sitting on the deck drinking wine and he came around the side of the house and stood smiling sadly, the flowers thrust in front of him, a charming boyish gesture. He looks much younger than 49 because of his slight build and blond hair and untroubled face. I like to tell him that God sent me to bring some agony into his life. His ex-wife is my age. He says it's just coincidence but I wonder if he likes older women because they allow him to remain boyish. I wonder if that's why he decided not to have children—fatherhood might have proved detrimental to his youthful charm. Whenever I try to discuss these things with him he tells me that he never thinks about age and that I should stop wondering so much and just enjoy life. He's probably right. I wonder if I'll ever see Snapper again. Neil doesn't believe in a hereafter, so there's no point in trying to discuss that with him.

"Snapper died at ten minutes to one. I'm going to put it in the Bible. I don't want to forget."

Neil kissed the top of my head. "I'll go and put the flowers in water," he said, and went into the house.

When I followed a few minutes later, he had already taken down the kitchen barricades and was filling in the nail holes. Snapper's bowls and blankets had been removed. I could still smell him, though. I knew that Neil was dying to scrub the kitchen floor, and refrained only out of tact. Some time in the middle of the night I awoke hearing Snapper scratching, bumping the kitchen barricade. I turned the fan on high, but underneath the whine of the fan I could hear Snapper moaning the way he had done when Neil first came to live with us in the old house—my house—and Snapper had been ousted from my bedroom. I suddenly longed for my old house, my old neighborhood, where Snapper and Thomas and I had lived together for years after the divorce, taking our nightly walks around the block. Walking loosened Thomas's tongue. "I never really hated you," he said one day, "I just had to get away to grow up." When he moved into a house of his own, he said, "I can't take Snapper. This is his home. And anyway, he's more your dog now than mine." Neither of us had admitted this before. Snap-

Jenny van Mill/**Walking Snapper**

per loved us both but he had gradually become mine. Every day when I came home from work, he was overjoyed—his ecstasy couldn't be contained. He would leap into the air again and again and then careen down the hallway for a mad five-minute dash through the house. We gave him a clear path and watched him go—in and out the bedrooms, back down the hallway, through the living room, the dining room, skidding across the kitchen vinyl. He made his circuit a dozen times, his route forming a rough figure 8. Eventually the ritual became known as "Snapper's figures." "Look out, Snapper's got to do his figures!"

We have no curtains at the windows here. The moon was huge and lit up the bedroom and the field. I got out of bed, put on my shoes and coat and went outside. I walked across the field to Snapper's favorite stand of pine trees. I breathed deeply but could only smell pine. "Are you up there, boy?" I knew it was juvenile to think that he might be up among the stars peering down out of his triangular cloudy eyes. "Forgive me, Snapper." I didn't know quite what I was asking him to forgive me for: for loving Neil, for subjecting him to the barricades, for hastening his death?

"You're doing the right thing," the vet had said, "allowing him to die gracefully." Comforting words, but I knew my motives weren't pure, that my grief would be mixed with relief, that I had a selfish desire to be rid of the mess.

I held Snapper's head and talked to him while they gave him the injection. He sank down onto the examining table and lay on his side. His milky eyes were wide open.

"There wasn't much of him left," the vet said and it was true. I'd been losing bits of him for years without really noticing. When had he stopped hanging onto the bottom of my bathrobe by his teeth so that I'd had to drag him behind me down the hallway in the early morning? When had he stopped doing his "figures"? When had he stopped hearing and seeing? When had he stopped wagging his tail? The last thing to die was his nose. Dr. Gold said it was just a muscle spasm—he had warned me they might occur—but when I saw his black nose

Jenny van Mill/Walking Snapper

twitching, I knew he was taking one last sniff at life.

I stood among the pines and looked back at the house. Neil was in there, warm in his bed, sound asleep. I was shivering—I could see my breath in the moonlight.

"I might have to move away from here, boy. I might have to get a little house of my own in town." I suppose I was talking to myself again. I walked across the field toward the house.

Emily Wheeler

YOUR THREE FACES

Were the first thing I saw
after registering the cracks like overtaxed synapses
that propped the useless windshield still in place,
the axel, wheelless, stuck in dirt like a plow at rest
after digging a furrow across the shoulder of the road,
the view from the wrong side of highway—cars charging us,
the blank backs of billboards advertising nothing
to people driving in the direction we faced,
the calm snow entering the car
like a team of EMTs
blanketing everything in sight,
soothing, heedless of cause and fault.
White as moons, wide-eyed, waiting to be told
what would happen next,
you, alive: my great dumb luck.
Like animals we groomed each other,
picked the wet flakes from our faces,
smoothed the dark fur of our fear,
prepared to step out into a world
only momentarily intact.

Emily Wheeler

BLOWING EGGS

Children learn early to crack them
against the hard edge of the mixing bowl.

I never get past their faces,
the rapt look of their attention
to the task at hand.

But blowing an egg through a hole
pricked with a pin is a skill
they never perfect.

The thick drool of the life force
gags them as they almost forget
to blow out, and instead suck in.

The white, lighter, exits first.

Yolk drips out in fits and starts,
the little ball of jell at its core
resists, its center pushes back
at the children's lips
which can't help widening
as the last reluctant lump spurts past.

On their mouths, grimace and awe;
in their eyes, a terrible attention.

Emily Wheeler

THE SOURCE OF ALL THAT SWEETNESS

At first it was like playing house.
We made games of shingling, wiring,
laying stone, assigned mock penalties
for bent nails, mismatched clapboard.
One of us was always slave for the day.
Long nights of retribution followed.
You loved the work, I loved working
side by side in the sun on the roof,
watching streams of sweat trace
the prairie places of your skin.
We pried huge stones from cornfields,
grunted them back hills so steep,
only a wild plum, which grew midway,
and the crush of its fruit, kept us going.
We forgave easily in those days,
the way we opened beers, had sex,
swam the lake, made babies.
It was always spring and perfumey.
There was a heavy smell of love in the air
and it did not press us down. Instead
we lifted our faces and saw the froth
of honey locust blossoms atop snakey black limbs.
In our own backyard, the source of all that sweetness.

Mary Winters

LOST COMPASS

Sailing off the edge of a flat world
—what's underneath?

The sailor thrown from the crow's nest
the first to find out.

Arms and legs torquing,
toes and fingers spread wide
(his mother in a dream howling
where is the angel to catch him?)

The last jotting in the ship's log:
giant sea snakes, their bodies in loops
—visible from beneath?

If the sea's shallow. . .

Even an inch over your head, you'll drown.
(Enough in a teacup to kill you, said Mother.
The wrong way down your throat.)

That edge: does the ocean thin out?

A beach without sand, only air?

Of all the hazards to end a life!

More likely the Plague, an axe slipped.

Quarrels that end in hanging.

(His wife dying in childbirth.)

Strong beer, the whiff of a certain weed
burning at the edge of a field:

is that what the sailor's feeling?

Delirium. *Getting outside himself.*

Like the time he had fever,
fell out of bed.

Thought he was flying.

Francine Witte

HERE'S WHAT THE MIRROR SAID:

Just a moment ago you
were a young girl,
frightened, new.

Your eyes have seen
youth, young adulthood,
and the between

years. Now you wait
for old age
like a patient
in a doctor's office,
reading a magazine,
turning a page,

waiting,
only to get called,
like always, just when

you find a good story.

Gary J. Whitehead

ICICLES

We used to pretend
they were knives
days when the sun
finally came out
bright as the light
trapped inside them,
and that we were pirates
in the Arctic, all we knew
of the geography of cold.
And once, when our play
melted into something else,
talk of one of us
moving away,
we counted the drops
as they gathered
at the sharp tips
and paused there,
as if in the change
from one state to the next
we could keep
the solid things we held
from falling apart
before our eyes.

Gary J. Whitehead

DECEMBER

When else with the hollow
sleepy after your walk
and a dying afternoon
laced for miles above a line
of trees pallbearing light

can the black crowing
in your breast lift without effort
to your mouth and the tall parade
of shadow stop when the dark
you walk with steps into line?

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The first of the two main parts of the paper is a review of the literature on the effects of the environment on the development of the human brain. This review is organized into three main sections: (1) a review of the literature on the effects of the environment on the development of the human brain, (2) a review of the literature on the effects of the environment on the development of the human brain, and (3) a review of the literature on the effects of the environment on the development of the human brain. The second part of the paper is a discussion of the implications of the findings of the review for the development of the human brain. This discussion is organized into three main sections: (1) a discussion of the implications of the findings of the review for the development of the human brain, (2) a discussion of the implications of the findings of the review for the development of the human brain, and (3) a discussion of the implications of the findings of the review for the development of the human brain.

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