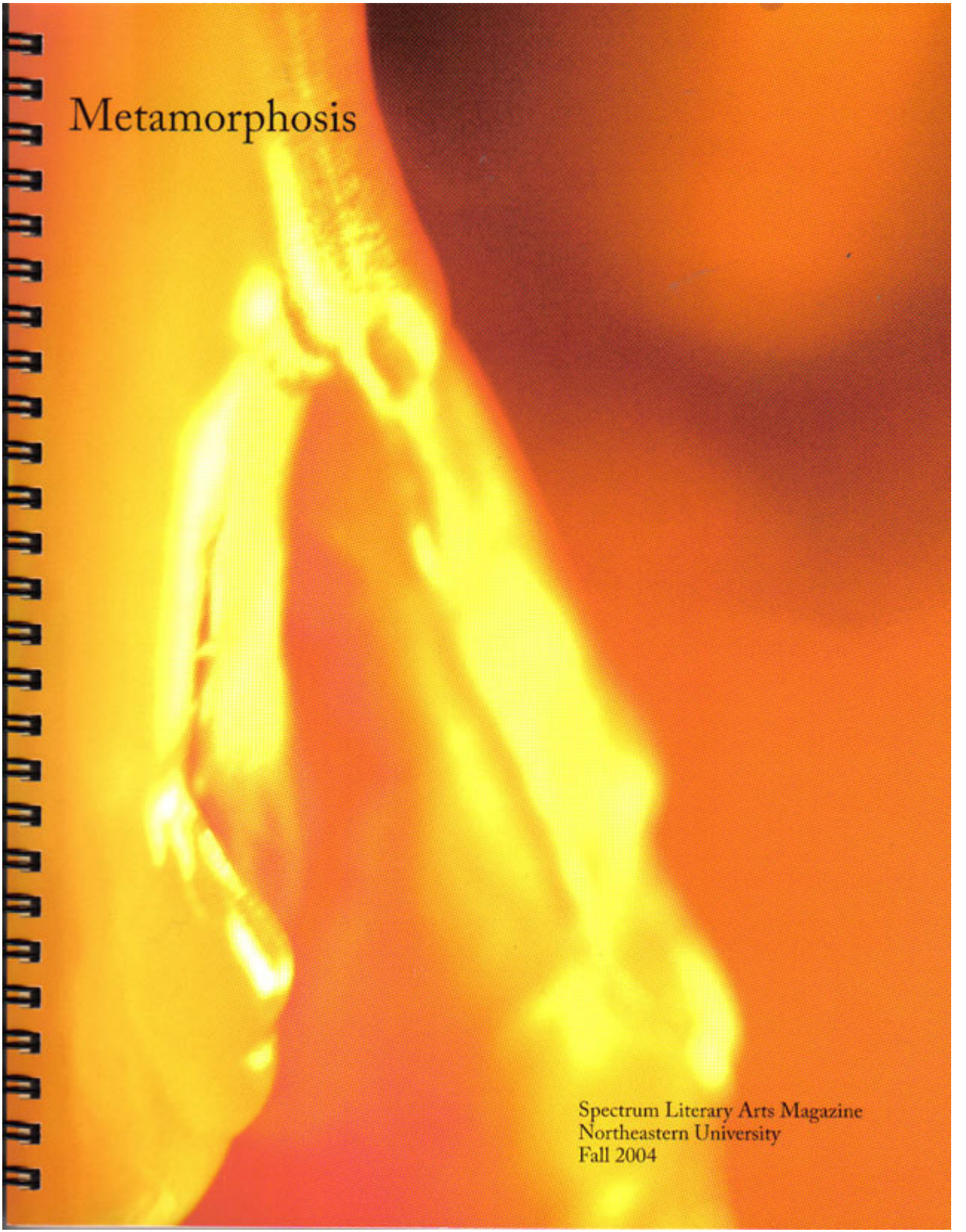
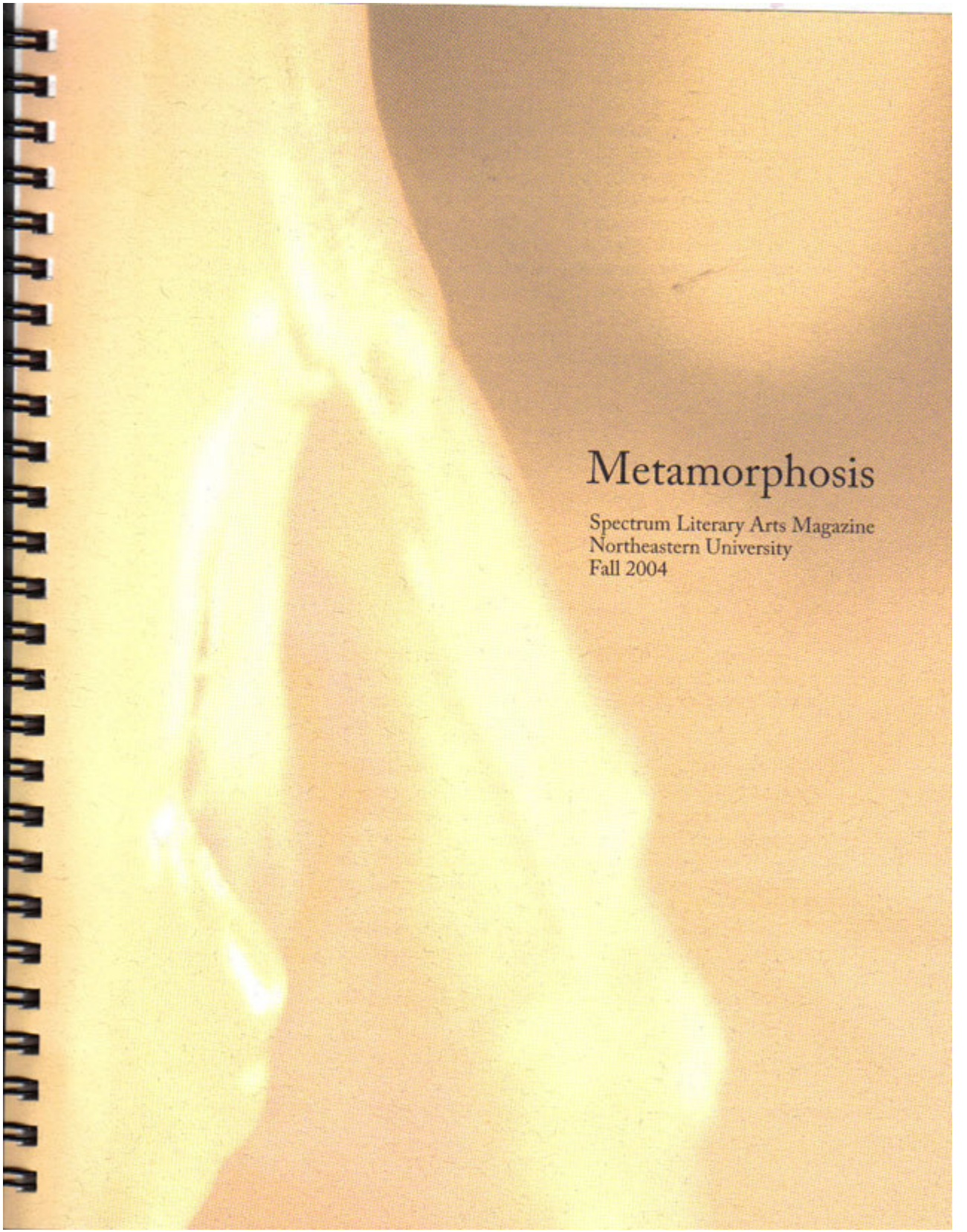
Metamorphosis



Spectrum Literary Arts Magazine
Northeastern University
Fall 2004



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Animus

Spectrum Literary Arts Magazine exists to infuse artistic expression into the community of Northeastern University. *Spectrum* came into being during the early seventies, and although we have struggled, our efforts to collect, publish and promote creative writing have not yet expired. The main focus of the magazine has been poetry and short fiction, but we also encourage the inclusion of other forms of creative writing as well as the visual arts. *Spectrum* can be found littered throughout campus semiannually, in various trash receptacles, and in the occasional place of business in the Back Bay area.

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Nicole Klosterman

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Jon Dubé
Laura Hughes
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Nina Ibarra
Jason Jedrusiak

Spectrum provides a forum for independently published creativity. Without submissions from the public, we do not exist. Our thanks to all contributers, staff, and advisor Sandra Miller.

Submit your work to our Gmail account or in hard copies in our mailbox. Emails must be **less than 1mb** and formatted as a **jpg**, **gif**, or **bmp** for visuals, and **doc** or **txt** for writing. Include your name as it should appear printed and contact information with your submissions, though work is reviewed anonymously at *Spectrum* meetings.

New members are always welcome. Meetings are held Monday evenings at 8pm in our office.

All material is property of the creators. Be nice, don't steal.

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Summer is in bones. By the time this issue of *Spectrum Literary Arts Magazine* emerges, summer will be in crumbled, desiccated marrow. The inspiration for the *Spectrum* you hold before you affronted your humble editor while summer was still in melting popsicles. Wallace Stevens' "Metamorphosis" relates autumn to streetlights lining avenues with hanged criminals and the onslaught of decay after death – while still maintaining a playful air. The poems and prose and visual art chosen for this magazine all follow this example as the rude leaves fall one after the other. Some poems trace metamorphosis with subject matter, objects, attitudes and images transition, others with their very construction. Poems like Nina Ibarra's "Peter Pan" and Jason Jedrusiac's "Brief Rainstorm" evoke the sad dissipation of identity while Erin Vinacco's "Midnight" and Jedrusiac's "Fool's Gold" rail against an even harsher metamorphosis. The end of every transition, as evidenced by these poems and others, as well as Jon Dubé's short story "Brennschluss," is not always an ephemeral beauty. Other poems, such as William Howe's "631," "632a" and "635," as well as Ibarra's "An Ode To Eliot," have been included because they are themselves a metamorphosis of other poems. Mourning, play and irreverence characterize the literary and visual works that compose *Spectrum*. With this in mind, enjoy the cumulative efforts of Northeastern University's artistic community.

Nicole Klosterman

Metamorphosis

Yillow, yillow, yillow,
Old worm, my pretty quirk,
How the wind spells out
Sep - tem - ber. . . .

Summer is in bones.
Cock-robin's at Caracas.
Make o, make o,
Oto - otu - bre.

And the rude leaves fall.
The rain falls. The sky
Falls and lies with the worms.
The street lamps

Are those that have been hanged.
Gangling in an illogical
To and to and fro
Fro Niz - nil - imbo.

Wallace Stevens

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Cover & Title Page Photograph
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The Fall

The Fall Trees
Drop their nuts and leaves
Their annual striptease
For the squirrels and the bees
Soliciting one more please

But down in town
With no one around
Old Mr. Brown
Waves a crown
And Eve drops her gown

While both stand nak'th
Eve has mistak'th
Sold her soul to the snak'th
And now she can't break'th
She must partak'th

Unforgiving autumn, unable to recall
That's why they call it The Fall

Mary Eileen Gallagher

When Over A Key Board Fingers Go Coaxng Sounds

when over a key board fingers go coaxing sounds
like a pianist typing
what ouija force is in control?
the hips and curves of a woman
the goose bumps of touch
moving thoughts like fingers
that go melting over what you say
the wetness of lips
about to move huge paintings past them
or a car covered lightly by snow
on a usually busy street?

in the way the snow falls,
the way my skin rises
as if to write out the brail
of what i'm thinking
along my arms
i know what i see
        is the artist
using me
        and I
am its whore.

winter

i miss the
water ripples,
summer sways
like slow jazz;
naked toes
improvise
across black fire
driveway,
backyard
muddy wet grass
splash sprinkle splash.

slip slide slip
frozen water
stumble stiffly
march, rush
quick beat
fast pace
closed off feet.

Erin Vinacco

632A

She drain – bliss hidden thin this guy –
Door – pudding ride my ride –
Freedom yer mother spill in flame
Myth cheese – end blue – reside –

She drain kiss peeper flan these –
Door – mould wren – glue do glue –
Freedom yer mother spill observe
Ass plunges – fuckit – blue –

She drain miss jostle fate egad –
Door – left hand – ezra door ezra –
End shadwell dither – shift ski-doo –
Last syllabus front round –

An Ode To Eliot

Where do I begin?
As I twirl my lucky ring
Tucking in my chin
While I am deep in thought
And my long legs that are thin
Are crossed like Indians do -
(But I am not Indian, I assure you)
Where do I begin?
What can I say
That has not already been said
That has not already passed through my head
As I lay quietly on my bed
A thousand times before?

You walk in and out then shut the door.

You bastard - who invited you in?
Do not step into this room where I dwell,
Where I live peacefully well.

I have seen many things:
The gold that lines the angels' wings,
The growth that hardship brings -
I have seen the mermaids swim in the sea
And they have beckoned to me;
Yes, they beckoned me to roam
In the ocean's frosty foam,
But the sand rubbed against my toes
And the sun hit my nose
And I looked -
I saw the sea deep and wondered about my feet
Or whether I could swim;
I cried: "I haven't any fins!"
So they waved to me, goodbye,
And my coward heart did die.

On the tomb where I'll be laid
They ought to write: 'She was afraid.'

Nina Ibarra

I have seen pirates
Whose song of lore
Brought me to watch them from the shore
And they yelled out:
"Where is the gold of old
That lines the angels wings
And all the beautiful things?"
I pointed to the sea for they are not with me,
"Not here on land with wicked man,"
I said to he.

Like an orphaned little boy
I have stood at the gates of hell
With nothing but a pitiful excuse to tell;
But when the devil saw my fleeing feet
It was as though he laughed to see -
He sent me back to the lands of earth
For even the devil didn't want me.
I have toiled and suffered my fate,
Eating garbage on a silver plate
And when the world stared me in the eye,
I barely escaped Hades gate.

This is where my spiel begins:
I know where the sun streaks on the land
And I have peeled them off with my hands -
Yes, I have peeled its golden rays,
I've plucked them before and kept them in store
For the rainy, cloudy days.
And I know
What lies at the foot of every rainbow
And what promises it holds
For those who believe in the pot of gold
At the end of every enduring trial,
For I have seen the path of sadness
And have trodden its thorny mile.
And on that rugged path
I have found my personal digging ground
Where I bury all my painful memories;

And the shovel still stays at arm's reach,
And where my naked eye can see
Lest more memories should come by me.

This is where I courteously bend,
And bring my poem to an end.

So farewell to the sea,
And its many hosts that call to me;
Perhaps one day
My boat of faith will sail me away
And I'll wave to the pirates with my sleeves
rolled
My arms shining like glazed with gold.
And I'll cry out with a shout:
"Watch me as my boat does sway
Wherever the wind brings me today,
I'm off! I'm off! And I'm away!"

And that is all I have to say.

Nina Ibarra



moss and juice-box

Michelle Bablo

Midnight

Birth of a new day
conjured in darkness
an hour of illusive slumber

Sleep, and you imagine
the world sleeps with you,
but no city sleeps.

Quiet, breathless hush pervades
a false sense of peace–
for there are worlds of wandering and wakeful.

Despite children
tucked in tightly against
demons of darkness

Girls become women,
mothers...screaming for sons
dying at far off hours;

Men start bar brawls and street fights,
upholding drunken justice,
more blood and bruises to regret;

And terror's frozen silence
clutches a young girl's mind
in hellish hallucinations.

Without a mother to comfort,
those that cannot drowse or dream,
remain aware of the approaching light.

Erin Vinacco

This Sky Belongs to Fallen Stars

At night, by the fire,
The lake lay out
Like an open eye
Unblinking in the face
Of the moon's effrontery;
Untouched by the cry
Of the loon
Or the call of deep,
Mourning echoes,
It sustained its own placid wake.

But the impassive lake
Stretched, unmoved
By its grief, or
The grooves we cut, or
The afternoon ghosts
Who lingered along the edge,
And lingered in our throats.
The cry against the lake
Faded to embers
In the fire, at night,
And sounded
Into muted bedrooms,
Whispered, silent sex,
And the ember of our loon,
Low burning melody
Died slowly turning
To the open eye.

Out of the window,
The shadow of the loon,
Across the empty moon,
Pulled out;
Its ashes fell,
Sooted our faces,
And the night, afraid,
Gave to.

Nicole Klosterman

Fool's Gold

Air exhalation.

After weeks of no effect
Directions dictate a doctor's visit.
The waiting room clock leisurely ticks,
Complicates the demonized defects.

Stiff shoulders, sore throats, splinters.
Hypertension, headaches, heartburn.
Cuts, colds, calluses.
Backaches, bruises, blisters.

Common ailments in a world of pain.
Wrapped in prestigious packaging,
The over-the-counter fool's gold remedy
Tries to help; instead renders me insane.

Kick start my current with chemical lies.
Pushdown and twist my pupils.
Twenty-two tablets by mouth twice daily,
An overdose in a multi-colored disguise.

Swallowing an excess portion of my poison,
Flash flood of elements render me
unstressed.
The effects only temporarily last,
Now my new obsession.

Dependence
An adrenaline boost to the body.
Undying appetite for glitter drug nuggets'
Habitual presence.

Addiction to prescribed pesticides.
I hunger hypodermic digestion
Bloodstream congested by crystal
medication
Insecticides infiltrate my insides.

Jason Jedrusiak

Enslavement pills.
Potion of hysterics and hallucination,
I float in a sea of delusional riptides.
Waiting for a message in the bottle that says no refills.

Trapped in an endless hour glass of
stimulants.
Advised into craving a cultured toxin.
The suggested dosage for a manufactured
disease
Chased by depressants.

Dangling in front of my face
I sit glass-eyed and motionless
Tranquilized circulation.
I yearn for one more taste.

All share in the common affliction of
infection.
Waiting for a message on the bottle
saying done and cured.
Entropy of society.
Impatient desperation.

Fatal inhalation.

Peter Pan

I am sorry for you little boy
Having to watch as the world grew up
Hovering behind glass windows
Peering into this world that you did not belong in.
And those you loved
Forgot about you
Forgot to leave the lock ajar
Forgot to listen for a tap on the glass
Forgot to look for your shadow...

Fighting pirates gets old
And mornings without mothers are lonely.

Poor Peter, you
Used to make everyone feel safe
You never thought twice about where to
Lay your head.
And now what have you
But a mis-named thimble in your hand
That isn't even good for fending off swords.
In this world, Peter,
Nobody remembers--
And people tell of your orphaned tale
As though it were something merry.

Nina Ibarra

Brief Rainstorm

A muggy day of the fall takes me
Back home for the first time since escape
Water drools from the sides of the train
Digs a mark in the glass

Drizzles down deeper and deeper
A streaking suffocation
I return to the town I grew up on
The places, the people I left

A bead of rain leaves a trace
Everywhere evaporation
Faded drops of me change
Into vapor I drift

New memories start fast
May they drizzle away
Slower this time
Slower than the past

Unwound

What fickle fortune, Father Time,
You've stunned me on my mountain climb.
As peaks were peering through the skies,
Your armored hands denied my rise.

First stagnant on the high plateau,
I sought to push against your blow.
But soon envisioned breath so light
That dreams came quickly with the night:

Through oceans, gardens, and decay,
I forged a path with no delay.
Not phased by where your spears were aimed,
I grappled rocks and beasts untamed.

As seasons slid from sun to snow,
And hunger's teeth bit from below,
I pushed on, stumbling, plagued with flaws,
And barely dodged your rigid claws.

Intrepid travelers taught to play
Passed by me in the dead of day.
Their pace was haughty, stiff, and straight,
A fierce, deluded march towards fate.

These pawns had sung your tune,
And bought their tickets to the moon
In hopes that as they fixed their beds,
A freeze would numb their ticking heads.

Yet I, good Father, laugh in jest;
This hillside knoll in which I rest
Is bound not by a clock's decree
But bends and deepens with the sea.

Lisa Pezzino

Departure

When the apricots tire,
when their wrinkles
drag the bough,

they fall

and scatter like strangers
on the ground.

The fruit fall
has come again
and we recoil
like tree limbs
in silent mourning.

Sonia Erlich

Many Hours Have Gone to Sitting

i.
Many hours have gone to sitting
and sighing and hoping and wishing;
I have thought my mind dry;
I have waited my time in vain.
Answers are brought in bottles from the sea,
but I am nowhere near the ocean,
indeed,
I am nowhere near the place I ought to be.

Peeking in from the corner of your bloom
I see you are waiting also;
you wait there by the moon;
you let the ashes fall
let them blow away.
You do not think twice of the words you say,
but I,
I am not like you;
I want to catch them as they fall;
no, I am not like you at all.

Who knows really,
the knitting of life,
how the buffalo knew where to migrate
or how the birds can map their flight,
or why the hair curls on your head,
or why the bull's back is so strong,
or why your eyelashes are black and long...
These things we'll never know,
I pile them in a heap
and watch the fires glow.

They are but chills that haunt me
like eyes that never shut
and miles away it stays the same
I wonder if I can sit and wait
if I know I wait in vain.

Nina Ibarra

ii.
Green hills upon those hands,
you've got bright green hills on those hands.
An industrious soft man
who looks both ways
and still looks nice;
there must be a reason why you
can fold a million smiles
and never do it the same way twice.

iii.
The truth is
I have sat looking at the sky
counting every time the earth moved;
I watched as the dust floated by
listening to everybody's life.
Let me tell you,
no one knew how the cliffs could fall
and the sun
could stand absolutely still;
they pondered and wondered
but no one knew,
and believe me,
no one ever will.

There's an answer somewhere
buried beneath the
rocks of ruined homes
where people have learned to
live alone.
I let myself float go
and float in the sea,
and not think of you,
but the ocean was so warm
and the sky was so blue,
and i began to think
of how nice it would be
if you were there floating next to me.

Nina Ibarra

635

Dice blink salon gist karloff mall
Mission she bars half come –
End were-newtlings forthe church –
Mist beams ash through theta rime

Bin digitant – shat she boy lascome –
Cid flock free mildewed bands –
End could outlet these condos fly –
Butts low vested ant – prouds –

Sheep pudenda bag ends toucanned –
Strike spittle collars – plowed –
These tips flow slicker – sin to hole –
Thief art bag ends two crowed –

Shin fly – mite amid severance bun –
Those're vive flaws, offal glove –
Shake tup mile spittle violence –
End brother forth – pre-prove.

William Howe

631

Bower elves fear myrmidons bummer – clear –
Spoor mission – causing dune –
End then door spittle strife line nailed,
Eye furried – blue – combine –

End mover shaken simple heart –
Wereewe head pigmy crown –
Dice humdrum ferrying ale fight –
Dye – blue – precede these fine.

Tissue – sour sutures stimulant day –
Floor dotage – raced these gun –
Whale motions – end then foremost glee –
Bore fevery ride combine

Tissue, floor martin fled thebean loom,
Form dine – sin crossed – wasp home –
End fret, slums bummer, the more dreams –
Butthole – stair gowned bin doom

Gardener

My stem vines across a white
wall.its
tendrils attaching without thought
thetanglethatensues is chaotic
and unnatural.



Number 00, South Hadley

Tess Matukonis
Lisa M Perry

river travel, and glory.

My deep graves are in my heart,
in finite rows.
I wouldn't know
another place to keep them.

(wooden coffins in silent
mahogany

dreamt
of streams.)

Sly deep graves without covers
forego posies past roses.

Must I learn
the other face of morning?

Empty tomes of saline brims
and ashen, cruel tongues

shattered
the salient dreams.

Clapped shut
clatter shut out
shattered
mahogany terra dreams.

The Way the Snow is Falling

the way snow is falling
weightless in its descent
the way it scarves shivering trees
my heart drifts in that same language
and covers the things outside my window
when I stop

alone and think
I swear my bell is so large because
my heart has sunk and swollen it
and the limbs of trees
bow at the weight of the snow
the way my lashes shudder under the weight of
sleep
my two snow gauzed wounds
see only through the sieve of weightless January
and leave me always
at the feet of what I feel
the snow is only rope

reeling my heart through my throat
through my window the young flake
in all its geometric glory has a tilt
a saunter to its drift as it rides the cold
down to its 30s
where it gets lost and plowed and shoveled
into banks on the side of the road
that sit and turn grey and ugly
and take up parking spots

Rick Beaty

monogamous decisions

cigarette breaks
slow, deliberate breaths
exhaling the tidal wave within

here you waver
trembling
at your own power

finding

life is all time
and distance
breeds discontent

tides of fervor swell
begin to pull;
another drag and she's gone

and the waves
sweep your body to sea
where you float lonely but free

Erin Vinacco

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