

The Plum Creek Review

Fall 2009

Go burrito! Microwave faster!
I wanted to have a real relationship.

Published by and for the students of
Oberlin College
Oberlin, OH

PCR Fall 2009

STAFF

Lauren Clark
Jesse Miller

Editor-in-Chief
Editor-in-Chief

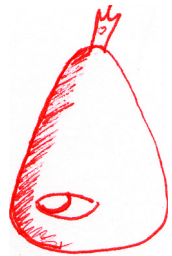
Galen Beebe
Danielle Blake
Allison Fontaine-Capel
Allie Hirsch

Publicity Liason
Treasurer
Arts Editor
Programming Liason

Rosemary Bateman
Adam Beaudoin
Adam Chambers
Magdalena Newhouse
Samuel Rowe
Julia Ruby
Lauren Schwartzman
Bailee Sims
Emily Wilson
Jeffrey Bernard Yozwiak

Cover by Joseph Dawson

All untitled images are from the Public Compendium,
an anonymous public journal project.



LETTERS

“I’ve been wanting to nurse...”	1	Marlo Barrera
La Muerte y el Prisma	3	Joaquín Rouales
The Refugee	7	Nicolas Guren
To My Bed	8	Sarah Konowitz
Stuart and Spearmint	10	Jeffrey Bernard Yozwiak
pgh g20	12	Danielle Gershkoff
The Long Sad Recollection about China	14	Henry Zhang
“(talking)”	18	Kai Evans
Grandad Play Autumn Leaves	21	Sarah Konowitz
Alpine Summer	23	Sam Rowe
The Mosquito	25	Fiona Chamness
The Thin Girl	26	Adam Beaudoin
Clipping	30	Alex Tamaki
Copenhagen	33	Hope Rehak
Triptych	35	Adam Chambers
Practice	37	Galen Beebe
Castle Life	38	Adam Beaudoin
First Love	41	Sarah Konowitz
Magnetism	42	Bailee Sims
They Took Me	44	Kalan Sherrard
Mayfly	48	Adam Chambers

IMAGES

	2	Allison Fontaine-Capel
Never Ever 4	6	Robben Muñoz
	9	John Kaufman
Built Then Burnt	11	Allison Fontaine-Capel
Franky	13	Robben Muñoz
	17	Jordan Feinstein
Never Ever 3	19	Robben Muñoz
Shell	22	Marlo Barrera
To The Death	24	Allison Fontaine-Capel
The Way We Bend The Knee	28	Maia Brown
Danny	32	Robben Muñoz
	34	Kat Lee
Drain Board	36	Alexander Voight
Necro Butcher	40	Marlo Barrera
	43	Allison Fontaine-Capel
	46	Rosalie Eck
Death Motion	47	Amanda Goldstein
Sammy	49	Robben Muñoz

I've been wanting to nurse something lately
that's demanding and unforgiving.
This is not a baby.

In fact, I spent months with a sack of fertilizer on my hip
to realize what a burden just holding the thing would be.

Maybe nursing it would be as a friend
described giving blood—the feeling of refilling
yourself and freshening up
down to the bones.

Maybe it would be a dog
filled with the ghosts of my ancestors.

Maybe it would be a hangover
filled with the ghosts of my ancestors.

Marlo Barrera



Allison Fontaine-Capel

LA MUERTE Y EL PRISMA

Joaquín Ruales

Revenge is a dish that tastes best when it is cold.

—Mario Puzo

El mundo jamás vio detective semejante a Alfred Müller, su perspicacia, dialéctica, y poder deductivo vencían a los de cualquier competidor. Sin embargo, Müller tuvo un único caso que no pudo resolver. Este caso fue una excéntrica serie de hechos de sangre que culminaron en el Cirque des Miroirs, entre el infinito son de la música de feria y la interminable tempestad de luces de colores. Aunque es evidente que Müller no pudo evitar el último asesinato, es igualmente innegable que lo previó, y que se acercó a comprender la morfología de esta nefasta serie de eventos. Es verdad que Müller no logró descubrir la identidad del asesino de Ruales, pero lo que sí supo era que debía haber cierta participación de Christopher Brown, cuyo segundo apodo es Brown el Dandy. Este criminal, a diferencia de los demás, nunca dejó de odiar a Müller, y buscaría vindicación a toda costa.

“...los espejos son abominables, porque multiplican el número de los hombres...” Se acordó el detective Alfred Müller al despertarse. Se había quedado profundamente dormido el día anterior, mientras leía un cuento más denso que el plomo.

—Además de oníricos, han sido somníferos estos cuentos...

Inclusive después de tantos años recordaba sus clases de español; se sentía sofisticado al decir la palabra ‘oníricos’. Botó el libro al suelo. Era domingo, y el día anterior lo había perdido por completo por el tremendo sopor que le produjo el cuento. Müller estiró sus piernas y se levantó, tenía los ojos hinchados y el cabello desgreñado. Apenas dio un paso, cuando chilló el teléfono, un colega le informó sobre un caso terrible. Alfred Müller salió inmediatamente a investigar dicho acontecimiento.

El primer crimen ocurrió al frente del local de magia de la ciudad, el Nord-Ouest Magic Shop, en una de las calles más desoladas de la zona, la avenida Transatlántica. El famoso escritor y mago Bernardo Ruales había muerto apuñalado la noche del día anterior, día 12 de enero. Uno de los guardias de la cercanía había llegado demasiado tarde, pero vio que salía de la escena del crimen un automóvil pequeño de color rojo y sin placa. El guardia halló a Ruales completamente muerto, y con exactamente tres cortaduras: una en el lado izquierdo del tórax (en el corazón), una en el lado derecho (como por equivocación), y una en la pierna izquierda. La víctima estaba rodeada de objetos mágicos: borlas de lana, una sogá, una capa, y un sombrero de doble fondo: los objetos que siempre llevaba a la mano por si encontraba una oportunidad de demostrar su talento. Del carro, por el

apuro del asesino, se había caído un pequeño objeto, un prisma triangular perfecto, hecho de vidrio. Este objeto no tenía huella digital alguna, evitando la posibilidad de usarlo como una pista biométrica.

Alfred Müller pensó un momento sobre el caso, tomó el prisma, y lo examinó. Este simple pedazo de cristal servía como un enano espejo triangular. ¿Qué habrá significado, para qué habrá servido?

—Seguramente lo mató un ebrio con traumas de su juventud. — Exclamó el comisario Smith — No a todos les gustan los payasos... O talvez lo mató un ladrón que, conociendo la fama del mago-escritor, haya pensado que fuera adinerado.

—Tal vez sea cierto, pero no interesante— confutó Müller. — Seguramente tuvo el asesino un motivo profundo para haber matado al mago justo al frente del local de magia y precisamente en esta calle.

—Crea usted lo que quiera, pero yo lo que quiero es atrapar a este criminal.

El segundo crimen ocurrió en el Parque Central, el día 13 de febrero. Varios de los pasantes atestiguaron que el afamado matemático Mauricio Williams se encontraba haciendo unos cálculos complejos en su pesado cuaderno, en la mesa de ajedrez del parque, cuando ocurrió la desgracia. Williams era un señor célibe de alta edad, cabello desteñido, barba densa y piel rugosa y gris; un anciano pulido por los años y consumado por la experiencia. A pesar de estar jubilado, Williams seguía resolviendo problemas matemáticos los días en que le sobraba vitalidad. La desgracia ocurrió así: de una buseta salieron tres hombres vestidos de científicos, quienes se sentaron junto al matemático. Se notó que Williams estaba inquieto, por su manera de mirar a los hombres y por su repentina tensión de sus hombros. Sin embargo, los testigos aseguraron, muy pronto Williams comenzó a hablar entusiastamente con los científicos e inclusive los siguió a la buseta. Unos pocos testigos vieron a Williams ser golpeado por un científico en la cabeza con una llave inglesa mientras se cerraba la puerta corrediza. Lo único que quedó del matemático encima de la mesa de ajedrez y cerca de una escultura de Pitágoras fue su cuaderno, repleto de fórmulas y triángulos. Nunca más se oyó hablar de Williams.

Müller recibió, una semana después, un imponente sobre sellado, de un tal René Descartes. El sobre contenía un minucioso plano de la ciudad y una carta. El plano tenía trazado una línea horizontal que comenzaba en el Nord-Ouest Magic Shop, seguía por cinco centímetros a lo largo de la avenida Transatlántica, pasando por el Parque Central, y terminaba cinco centímetros más allá, en el Club Deportivo Olímpico. La carta explicaba sucintamente la hipótesis de este tal Descartes: mencionaba la sucesión de fechas, 12 de enero, 13 de febrero, y predecía que lo más obvio era esperar un tercer incidente el 14 de marzo en el punto indicado en el mapa. Decía que la razón sería evidente. La carta estaba firmada “Quien no piensa, no

existe —Descartes”

Alfred Müller sintió, de repente, que estaba por descifrar el misterio. Una escuadra y unos sencillos cálculos consumaron su basta intuición. 5 cm, días 12 y 13, las heridas hechas a Ruales, los objetos de magia, el prisma, la estatua pitagórica, los triángulos en los palimpsestos de Williams, todo apuntaba a un solo hecho: el siguiente crimen no se realizaría el 14 de marzo, sino el 5. Müller trazó una línea vertical desde el Parque Central, una línea de 12 cm. Luego una oblicua desde el Nord-Ouest Magic Shop hasta el final de la línea recién trazada, medía 13 cm.

—He podido resolver el problema—Aseguró Müller a Smith por teléfono—El siguiente crimen se realizará en el Cirque des Miroirs, el 5 del siguiente mes.

Alfred Müller se encontraba en un tren viajando hacia el sur la madrugada del 4 de marzo; aún no salía el sol y la frigidéz reinaba. El detective estaba intentando descifrar el autor de esta serie de delitos. —¿Será Christopher Brown, quien siempre ha cometido los peores crímenes? Por suerte a su hermano lo encerré bien, pues de lo contrario el mal sería el doble.

Al bajar en la estación y transportarse al Cirque des Miroirs, Müller comenzó a investigar. Las luces y la música estaban encendidas para tratar de atraer a clientes madrugadores, aunque nunca daba resultado. Nadie estaba atendiendo en la boletería, pero el detective logró abrir la herumbrosa verja a la fuerza. Müller se halló inmediatamente en un laberinto de espejos, en donde se fabricaban centenas de copias de su persona y al mismo tiempo ninguna. “...los espejos son abominables, porque multiplican el número de los hombres...” se acordó. El lugar era vasto, pero Müller no se podía mover, sus ubicuos duplicados le bloqueaban el paso con su piel siempre plana y helada. Cuando al fin se movía era como si no lo hiciera; regresaba al mismo lugar; regresaba en el tiempo; sus clones lo perseguían. El espacio era infinito, el tiempo no se podía diferenciar entre eterno y estático. Todo este universo era falaz, pero a Müller le fue imposible convencerse de aquello. Repentinamente se añadió otro ser infinito a la escena, Christopher Brown, un malhechor pelirrojo con una sonrisa de oreja a oreja, una de esas sonrisas ferales que sólo invaden a una persona cuando comete un crimen que ha planeado durante toda su vida. Todos los Brown agarraron a todos los Müller, todos se fusionaron y sólo quedaron los dos originales. Entraron a un cuarto cúbico blanco, en la pared había un pequeño orificio por donde entraba un rayo de luz del amanecer. Alfred Müller deliraba mientras el malhechor le daba una letanía de complejas explicaciones y se burlaba de su ingenua ingeniosidad. Müller le había ahorrado a Brown un día entero de espera. Christopher Brown finalmente sacó su revólver, y arrojó a Müller al suelo. El prisma se cayó de su bolsillo y se creó un arco iris. La música de circo siguió tocando. Alfred Müller sintió que estaba en el paraíso.



NEVER EVER 4

Robben Muñoz

THE REFUGEE

At the northern border wait the sitting rooms,
bowls of candy, and the hooks, the knives.
Light holds you
for the interrogation. Why
you've come? Your name
and work?

Afterwords you're encouraged
to visit the temple,
see the altar, and take
a few photographs.
Nests lie in the eaves above.
A mother bird cries in what must be
a ritual in these parts
as if she tires of waking
to the smell of burning sticks.
You kneel
but only to get a better angle
on her speckled beak.
Meanwhile behind you
arrives another black van.
Meanwhile the sky
hurries soundlessly into exile.

Nicolas Guren

TO MY BED

you sink my limbs
into clay
take me under
 my pulse
unravels like smoke
as the naked
black bowl
rolls to dawn

a game for you
isn't it
how long can you keep me
one more
minute, you pray
and I repeat

a scoop of skin
smooth as whale wings
dollop of sleep
sheets crease
ponds wink
with fallen leaves

how long
can we

 and when
I am away
you glaze over
like rain on a snow hill
a pool of honey
left out
a day too long

Sarah Konowitz



Jon Kaufman

STUART & SPEARMINT

She had a diamond stud
in her nose and it
glittered like a shoot-
ing star
spearmint

He, with dry lips and a
coarse goatee, read the
words
of dead poets

I
chewed a stick of
gum

His knuckles gripped
the podium
and

her hipbones

brushed

mine

“I don’t think this is our
scene,” she muttered
and her ice-mint breath

shot

to my spine

lips

“Definitely not,”
I whispered and my

brushed

her earlobe

her toes
curled in flipflops

our skin

tingled with

goosebumps

His eyes
dull gray behind
glasses

met

mine
periodot-sharp

as my fingertips
jeans.

traced beneath her

Jeffrey Bernard Yozwiak



BUILT THEN BURNT

Allison Fontaine-Capel

```

Seealsodissent(SLAIDESHAW):
only$22"/dIIInInvAiteyaoutathaPAATAY/diDIprauvenprAAgres-
sAINARKISTneuz/september24_fastest_read_up_to_the_minute_
newsdevice/neuzdivisdivis/eater/eater.py",theWURLdisLUSTEE, in
prAUXreSS
self.thisURL) innasense"/usedforweblogforweblogweblogprautess/
thAUzandzAUppaozDDtoYAHOO!/Thursday,preparations,protests,fi
nancialissues;totals23groupblogpAUsts/RESIST.awwgAWXYmArAn-
gAWn/ETr/uppy", itsHoTTnewinauguralmEEtin 369, in eat
remote=self.open(url)
sAluLauwnly22dawlas"/POLICEgetTHIERpaichikitelegraph.uk/anno-
santcansparacyrEalatayTayVay/infiniti'sbabyinfinitiinfinitiinfiniti'sbabyba
bybabinfiniti'sbaby/RESISTantDURIVATivesduravitavesdurivatavesoft-
huWLLD", ofthewild, thewild
return getattr(self, name)(url) autobahnd"/quiteTHAUsandZa-
uppaudzforthepresentfromtheroad/UNITTDbyImEErialprAU-
grammNG/yungNupcUmng.5/urllib.similarconCEpT", linesOFS-
TONEMEN, in open_prAUGrammNG
h.endheaders()
Brubru"/brutAILitEoftheInflnItImInIstIr/factoryNOWmuche-
asierTAcANTRAWL/stLLbaistaindahzTRaPPd/pAIcheKKdis-
GRACEdPAULEESfierteahgahs@vauluntarysignup/SECURITY.
SUMMUT",inendheaders
self._send_output()
BLOg"/tuKtaStrEEtSluxurEznatfathauzSpozdTAAppeEALwithgreat-
cuRRvz/VeryGoodLikeWatchingAMovieThatStartsOffSLawLy/
theWuRLDlustingwthaTTenTiVhips/nuzznuzznUZ.telegraph.uk",
policelinegetthIERdisrespect, in _ministerial_numBAH
self.send(msg)
Anauxymaran"/gawnITSHAWTnAWremoresomea'th'feartistAUTO
BAHND/furdapresent'ndfurdafutur/similarleadasreviewedprawgrass.
limituseonly/discuSHUNahInternashUNAL", fInanz.py,insead
self.connect()
SafistiKatDPLAUSSofDiReCtAcTiOn"/greatcombinaSHUNofyieldz/
addSUMPURRexcitmntntintoYourGlobalEvent/furbishTwTHpAW-
ShequipmNt.firelimit/uZdAwnly4.rights-issues".peacefulbaby,inconnect
socket.SOCK_STREAM):
IOError: [Great curves used for imperial programming] (-2, 'Name or
service not known')

```

Danielle Gershkoff



FRANKY

Robben Muñoz

THE LONG SAD RECOLLECTION ABOUT CHINA

Henry Zhang

The armies of those I love come across the green bay waters Liberty.

I too am looking for a home.

Once my mother asked me over a pot of tea what I would like to be when I grew up. "Who knows?" I told her. "Whatever this country will let me be."

There is a folk saying in Chinese, *ai ni xiang mei you yian cho*. Not everything works out but we do our best, it says, but it means, more literally, loving you is like running out of cigarettes.

A cigarette is a rolled-up track of tobacco that you light and inhale. When they were first imported to China, many, many people began smoking them. They were like a first step to Westernization. My grandfather smokes them. My mother, who was born in the 60s, does not.

Cigarettes make you look occupied. They made my grandpa, when he waved goodbye to us in the airport, look occupied. My mother just looked sad.

We learned, though, and I learned well, though my parents were not as young as they used to be. When we got here we learned that smoking was bad because of nicotine, rat poison, and tar. Everyone knows that these days.

They are bad. Trust your neighbors. They've been here longer than you. If you do something bad, they will report you to the government, and no one really knows what happens to you after that. Just listen to suggestions. Don't cause any trouble.

Everyone had something to say about America. There are cameras in places you wouldn't believe. Inside traffic lights. They have so much money, my aunt told us, that they can afford to lay miles and miles of concrete with little lights, and those are the lights you see in the center of the road when you drive at night. A thousand of them. A million.

I recall those lights. On a runway, there are barely any. The day we landed in Chicago, I woke up and saw them and the neon orange of the men who worked in the airport, their glowing sticks moving back and forth like eyes.

When we got off and talked for ten minutes in the waiting room they were there outside. An old man walked over to us and asked for change. He was Chinese, and he told us his family was sick, that the country was sick, and we were not sure what to do, but I remember the great pressure of many eyes on us and that my mother took out a bill and my father handed it to him and that he thanked us and left. My mom told me that he spoke in the broken Chinese of a man who is born in China and moves to America and belongs to neither. It is too late, too late, she said, shaking her head.

It will be strange for you, said the aunt. Because over there is something new. Except for them, you will be the new thing. And about that, I think, she was right.

I remember our neighbors' sons, when we first settled in to our little suburb in the South, hearing that I was new, brought out a disc and threw it around with me at night. They must have thought it was kind to play with the new Chinese kid, and it probably was, but I barely said a word, looking always back to my mother, who was watching with an awkward smile.

In China there was smoke and city. In our town there were more houses than people, and more people than things we understood. Moving like this is not a rapid change—except it is. I grew up with the other kinds in the south and for the most part they were not cruel. They were not xenophobic and they were not afraid, and in that way they were different from me. But I learned, slowly, so slowly you could barely notice it: I learned my first English word when one boy pushed me in the back and said "go!" indicating that I should move forward with the rest of the queue.

Then one day I saw my first yearbook photo, and realized it. The difference is not in the realization, but in the acknowledgement. You did not look in the mirror and see that you were different—except you did. Is there really something different? Even though I grew up here and spoke the language? Yes.

I became a citizen this past summer. I went into an air-conditioned room and looked at a man with the rest of the kids who were taking the oath. I raised my hand and said the few sentences that he told us to, something about duty and something about dignity, almost like a toast, and that was that. Only why was there the feeling that I had lost something? Something important? Something tickling the edge of my mind.

How to describe it? The feeling. It is like smoke. Like watching man draw mantras with water in the parking lots, there and then gone. No, that doesn't

make sense. It is like trying, trying and not quite succeeding. In that way it is like running out of something just when you need it most. Something that you have lost for a long, long time, but only realized it recently. No, it is like what? What exactly?

It is like waking. It is as if you have slept for a long time and opened your eyes and seen the world anew. Not as if you had suddenly found it changed to all reasoning and you changed because of it, but as if it had been like that all along. It is like waking from a sleep. No, not that either.

Then my mother comes in and tells me to do my homework and to stop writing all the time. It doesn't do you any good when you can't keep up with your homework. We argue, I halfheartedly, for propriety's sake. The feeling in the back of my mind is beginning to disappear—and for some reason I am frightened. I must not forget. Or something like that.

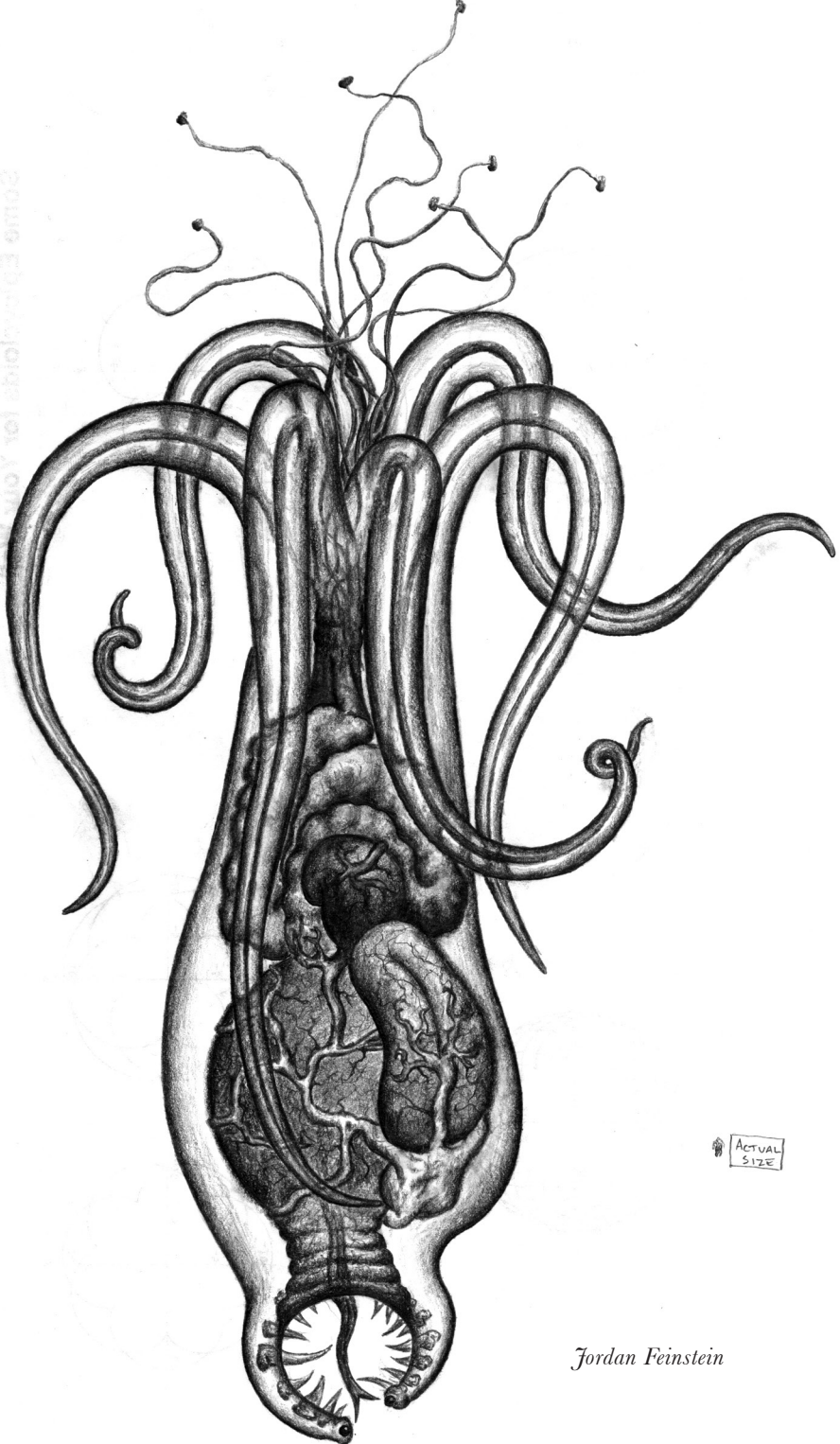
Not everything works out but we do our best. Outside a boy goes by on a bicycle, as most of the boys do in China. Out here there are many more cars.

And there is love. Even when we lose some things, there is that. I am Chinese yet I am American. In china there is the word for it, ai. People don't use it anymore, not really—but not for want of proving. It's as if they scrawled it down and held it up to the light and realized how unnecessary it was, and how obvious, and so now it's become a vestigial word, a word little boys use while their parents look at each other in mute appeal. There is the memory of before, and even before that, when my grandfather walked out onto the balcony of our apartment and smoked, so that none of it got in the house.

I don't smoke. Is it important to say that? But what I mean is that when it is so dark you can't see the earth and the moon has come out beneath the tree limbs and the streetlamps are just other moons, and sometimes I take a walk in the silent streets under the trees and carry my jacket like a cape, and I think of my name, and the country I come from and the one I am in, and then I think I understand the old Chinese folk saying. Does that make sense? Dreams that are just smoke and incense in temples, and smoke from cigarettes and nicotine-stained fingers, a dream of the winter, of cold breaths like halos, like smoke.

Smoke and then bright lights, a thousand million of them. Is it both? I still see people smoking cigarettes under neon green traffic lights, open-all-day lights, in slow new year's nights, in soft, sad December.

Some Echinoderms for You



ACTUAL SIZE

Jordan Feinstein

—(talking)
mouth against mouth—

—(talking)
against mouth
 against nipple
 against
guardrail self—

—you lean deep—

—you smooth
a curled and clipped jagged cunt:
 a bouquet
 of maudlin squints—

—it's we us
usher in this
 spit stutter
orgy of unsaid sentences this
come closer
you'll get it
come closer and
you'll get it come and get it—

—outside
it's greenlavender
 between
 morning clouds—

—wrapping our legs
we wrestle and untwist something from
itself—

—through the window the warm
wind
breathesout then in—



NEVER EVER 3

Robben Muñoz



GRANDDAD, PLAY *AUTUMN LEAVES*

No—how about something
I wrote, instead?
Chalky hands,
ones that unscrewed jars
and smashed crabapples
on the neighbor's fence
 (when their mutt, let loose
like thunder from the night
clouds, crushed
the fresh marigolds)
those cold sausages
poised above the piano keys
like leaning towers.

And as you began to play
that mangled, serrated song,
a militant jangle of dotted eighths,
jigsaw, skip-fingers, chromatic
climb, your Pharaoh bridged nose
high and edged like the Pyramids themselves,
a white wand, thin, quick
charged with a hollow rage
un-zippered the wallpaper, crisp
and too soon a long curl of smoke,
a gray heap and two stunned heads.

Was it within You
that silvery bolt,
flashing out, thrashing
like dog jaws in the yard?
Or within me
a scream
something I wanted to hear.

Sarah Konowitz



SHELL

Marlo Barrera

ALPINE SUMMER

The afternoon hissing
hanging thick on
junipers, on jutting shale
An alkaline heaviness

*

Crushed snail—
smear and quiver
tapering shards
O ruptured cream-egg
of my blue-dog nights

*

The billow-green valley of
sedge and swell and rivulet—
darkling

The loping elk and their
unreasonable
banshee whoops

*

Bear shit is
dark loam and silence
Rich with seed
and pale writhing
multitudes

*

Granite country
slacks its jaw
opens up for
dusty libation

Sam Rowe



TO THE DEATH

Allison Fontaine-Capel

THE MOSQUITO

Though always weak where killing is concerned
I killed. Thinking malaria, knowing
revenge, new-bitten, aware yes,
illogic—what matter danger when the welts
are on the skin already,
no more, you will have no more of me.
Up the curtain within the fold it walked
on spindled legs to the level of the hands
almost singing (your chance,
your chance,
you are god) and the hands
closed, one on either side of the fold,
obscene in prayer I and the hands I own
opened and the blood was there,
rounded the mark and I realizing
it, wings and needle, was swollen
with me, filled bursting with the blood,
there and mine and cannot be returned.
It was more me the thing than was itself,
oh forgive and how do we kill
greater things, god my heart
is not my heart, some stain
is on the curtain, was gone from me before
then, I killed, I kill now, mercy,
what are you but a thing among us more us
than otherwise that flies
and sings and stings—
I am afraid to close my hands
on you, forgive now and come
to my heart, forgive.

Fiona Chamness

LA FILLE MAIGRE

Je suis une fille maigre
Et j'ai de beaux os.

J'ai pour eux des soins attentifs
Et d'étranges pitiés

Je les polis sans cesse
Comme de vieux métaux.

Les bijoux et les fleurs
Sont hors de saison.

Un jour je saisirai mon amant
Pour m'en faire un reliquaire d'argent.

Je me pendrai
À la place de son cœur absent.

Espace comblé,
Quel est soudain en toi cet hôte sans fièvre ?

Tu marches
Tu remues ;
Chacun de tes gestes
Pare d'effroi la mort enclose.

Je reçois ton tremblement
Comme un don.

Et parfois
En ta poitrine, fixée,
J'entrouvre
Mes prunelles liquides

Et bougent
Comme une eau verte
Des songes bizarres et enfantins.

Anne Hébert (1916-2000)

THE THIN GIRL

I am a thin girl
And I have beautiful bones.

I give them close care
And strange pity

I polish them constantly
Like old metals.

Jewels and flowers
Are out of season.

Someday I will seize my lover
And make myself a silver reliquary.

I will hang myself
In the place of his missing heart.

Filled space,
Who is this feverless guest suddenly in you?

You walk
You move;
Each of your gestures
Adorns nearby death with terror.

I receive your trembling
As a gift.

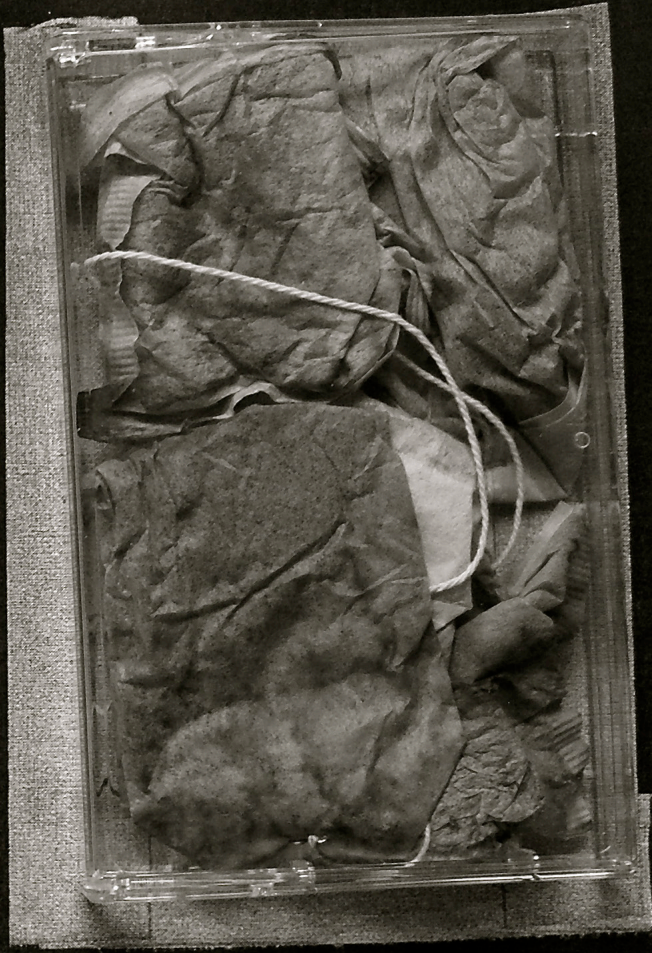
And sometimes
In your chest, fixed,
I half-open
My liquid eyes

And there stir
Like green water
Bizarre and childish dreams.

tr. Adam Beaudoin



THE WAY WE BEND THE KNEE



CLIPPING

What are we looking for, I wonder.
What is there we cannot
 hope to singing find
 what is this here I wonder

wonder whether truly if
 all of what we want is love.
 So.

So maybe lines move quickly on the roadside.
 Child hills don't show the way

we moving on and moving on

there are such human things to find
 to see of life and death and life

his daughter plucks a single rose.

 Not sad, no, it's really a release.

Not sad, a far more gentle death
I keep returning to again.

Again. again again again.

And I don't know if I can ever,
 ever truly understand

why children see. She wants

to let them play together all

but still I'd like to play with you.

 I'd like I hope to

 sing to you. Sing songs

 child, sing us too.

 So listen. Fleet-foot life
 Waiting. Waiting

listen. Light-foot

listen to the story, here,

for this is where cicadas live
for thirteen years inside the earth,
and only waiting for the day
cicada's life will be a day
And all there is, is this:

It's so much longer than our own.

So.

So I cried, when I watched a broken man
get on a train and leave his son
behind him. It was for the best.

I know the child wants to let her

don't know why I couldn't do it
any of the other times.

sing us, too

I don't know why.

I know
roam us, too

know it's always hard to say
these things to someone else
and only hope they understand.

But still, I hope you understand.

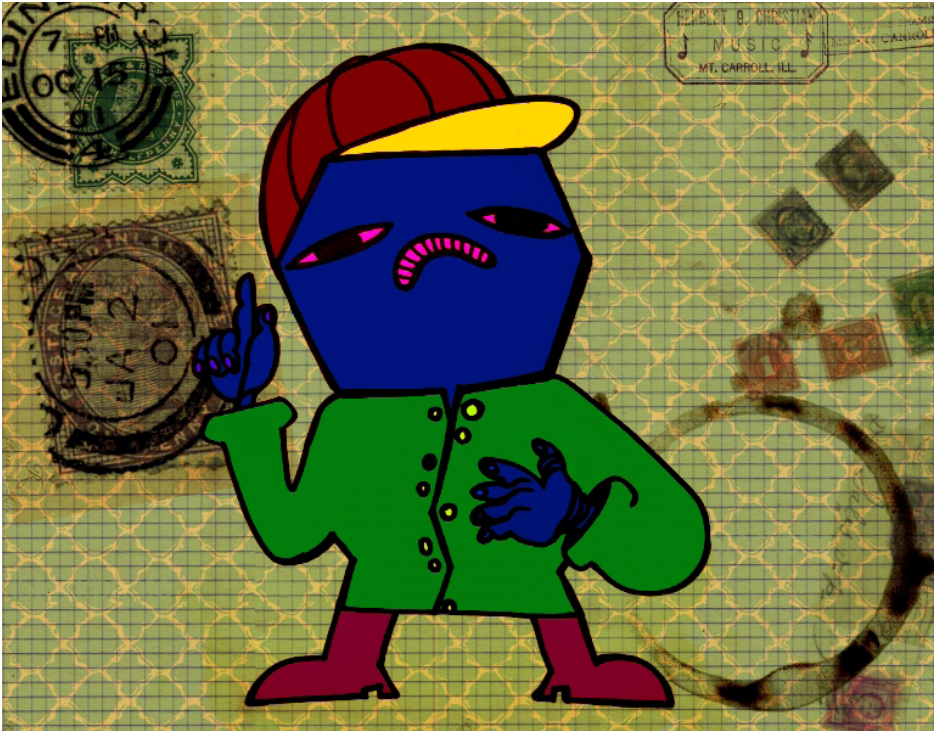
And I want to kiss the child. play

So let me tell you a secret. sing

Someday, I'd like to learn to speak. whisper us

Someday, all people want is to be loved.
Some day

Alex Tamaki



DANNY

Robben Muñoz

COPENHAGEN

Describe a lake as seen by a young man who has just committed murder. Do not mention the murder.

—John Gardner, *The Art of Fiction* (1983)

Two white curtains in a rented room
sit heavy on their dusty sill. Her body already aches
for this place, braces for the separation. The visa in her coat
is counting days.

At the window, she thinks of
two men who never saw this city, and tries to measure
how long she will watch the cars, smell the smoke,
rinse reminders off her palm.

America is only a place
where great aunts sewed dresses and great Depressions
hung fathers. She threw that story away
and came to the old world to breathe its harbor air.

Describe a city as seen
by a young woman who has lost.
Do not mention the loss.

Hope Rehak



TRIPTYCH

a thin strand between here and the water
an empty beach where day is always ending
pelicans' granulated shadows over dune-grass
the scurry of mole crabs in wet sand
the way waves hatch from gentle tide
all of this: i've found it wanting
salsplashed, in love, and furiously
pinnacled pointing towards a heaven
of striated wings, clouds, full of
no great life, no great warmth
the small breath of horseflies on the inland
sickle of sand and a congruent moon

telephone poles with wire unraveling
flayed out like hickory as if
i were the last person to walk here as if
this was the last night on earth
and then, only a curious tango among the
nightcrawlers tumid on blank concrete
starless windows heavy with speech
tin chariot without a driver
roll down that long boulevard, bitter gypsy
feel the gray wind in your mother's hair
and all the pulling-ness, the vines
the ripping, growing things beneath the street

it's probably the rain on the leaves
which makes me feel it's getting colder
the way it makes all other things silent
it's probably the creek that winds back
all the way into the woods which
makes me feel i'm lost even now
anyday i could sink through the mulch,
break the apartheid of ground and sky,
believe something knotted and outside myself
i am close-clamshelled and waiting for silence
don't gather branches now before the storm
you will not make it through the winter

Adam Chambers



DRAIN BOARD

Alexander Voight

PRACTICE

On days like this—when the sun
is hunting cicadas through the grass—
I remember the path
of milky footprints that led to the bathroom

whose door was never locked. There,
four slick bodies danced—
nieces turned tanned faces
to shower's panting, palms clutched

on mother's hips. In those middle years,
I blushed at the hair
on my sister-in-law's thighs
that bowed like offerings, the ribbon

bones that flexed like corsets
and rippled the Himalayas
across her daughters' sides.
(Later, they will thank these frames

slim these muscles firm these bodies
active, but children of such an age
count no blessings.) I never questioned
how my life reflects itself

in my mother's thankful folds,
only turned from her breasts when I sprang
too quickly through her closed door.
When I am forty-eight, my stomach

will burrow into itself, crow's feet
will crawl from my eyes, and I will stand beside my daughter,
beneath the shower, bare as ice.

Galen Beebe

VIE DE CHÂTEAU

C'est un château d'ancêtres
Sans table ni feu
Ni poussière ni tapis.

L'enchantement pervers de ces lieux
Est tout dans ses miroirs polis.

La seule occupation possible ici
Consiste à se mirer jour et nuit.

Jette ton image aux fontaines dures
Ta plus dure image sans ombre ni couleur.

Vois, ces glaces sont profondes
Comme des armoires
Toujours quelque mort y habite sous le tain
Et couvre aussitôt ton reflet
Se colle à toi comme une algue

S'ajuste à toi, mince et nu,
Et simule l'amour en un lent frisson amer.

Anne Hébert (1916-2000)

CASTLE LIFE

This is an ancestral home
Without table or fire,
Dust or carpet.

The twisted allure of this place
Is all in its polished mirrors.

The only thing to do here
is to gaze at them day and night.

Throw your reflection at the hard fountains
Your harshest look, without shadow or color.

See, these mirrors are deep
As wardrobes
Still some dead lives behind the silvering
And covers your reflection
Clings to you like algae

Adjusts himself to you, thin and naked,
And feigns love in a slow, bitter shiver.

tr. Adam Beaudoin





NECRO BUTCHER

Marlo Barrera

FIRST LOVE

Let the fog drape over the terrace
under our feet and sweep us
out to that one line of pavement
away from tree spindles
and the laundry lines
clipped with our shorts.

Let us follow the mudslide
swell like clouds in a lightning-flecked sky.
We laugh as if underwater
as if we cannot see the mountain
shadow before us.

For now, you are mine
and we rise into a net of stars
each of us wondering
who will fall
first.

Sarah Konowitz

MAGNETISM

YES,

W H O R E
W E
F M I G H T
F O R G E T,
R O O M S
E M P T T E A
M E B B B B B
E N O
M E M O R
E R

YES, REMEMBER ME.

Bailee Sims



Allison Fontaine-Capel

THEY TOOK ME.

Kalan Sherrard

Then after Processing I guess we all got put on this giant War Bus and got to have pleasant conversation together and when the bus pulled into the metal shutters of the garage and stopped a fat man got on, opened the main cage we were all in and he said "I'M LUXOR ZYGOG III ESQ, or something, CAPTAIN OF THE C.E.R.T. TEAM, AND I ORDER YOU TO COMPLY, WILL YOU COMPLY?" and we sort of rustled and he said "GOOD"

...

and I was thinking still about how this was all quite suspiciously well-orchestrated for a modern-dance ballet and that the set was really something.

...

Because it was very boring I am describing the geographic contour of my small cell so maybe you can understand it. It's important that if you get bored you go away.

...

so I looked like a Chinese acrobat.

...

So I kind of went down the far Red stairs and still had a pretty stupid loud haircut and I think one of our guys had been bailed out at \$3000 or 10% or that cause he'd been wearing a sombrero or something and there was a bank of 10 phones but 3 of them were dead and it was insane to try to call on them and I kind of bantered with some people who were laughing and kind of having an ok time laughing and there were some tables and chairs around and some people looked kinda mean but really everyone was just people and there was one really fat guy

...

Still, I didn't really get that ripped, and the food was not quite as good as that cake I dumpstered over and over again from our filth in North Dakota after I ejaculated into my socks and then put them on but I got most of it in and it was wonder bread and things that seemed to want to be acting like potatoes and mush and a lot of meat mostly and some smears of ketchup or something like butter.

...

and when I went back to my cell to be locked in again I made some suspenders out of the bits of sheet the other guy must've left there and kind of gnawed little holes in my pants to tie them onto. Then all that day I was all coming in and out of my cell wearing each time more accoutrements, a bow-tie, a headband, a top-knot like and this guy said how "this cat's a pimp even in jail" and I ran around for a while and the guy said how was I doin and I said ok it was ok here and he said yea this can go in your memoirs and

I been thinkin since how he was sayin that to an activist white kid and 3 million Americans are in jail or prison and it should be considered a civic duty and hella people are so scared of it like that crying 120 lbs. girl , and then later about how with bail if you're rich you just pay the whole \$70,000 and get it all back but if you're poor you have to lose \$7,000 to a bondsman so the rich stay rich and the poor get poorer like in the G20, or like how on the wall of my cell it also said "they aim to take us away from are families" and "so many fatherless children" or something like to obviate the connection between black guys in prison and perpetuating no male modeling for black kids as a conspiracy theory to undermine the community and I thought that even though its not maybe a real planned conspiracy, that doesn't matter cause the effect is the same so it might as well be and it makes itself one, right.

...

so then I had started to make 1000 paper cranes out of a food-stained W2 form

...

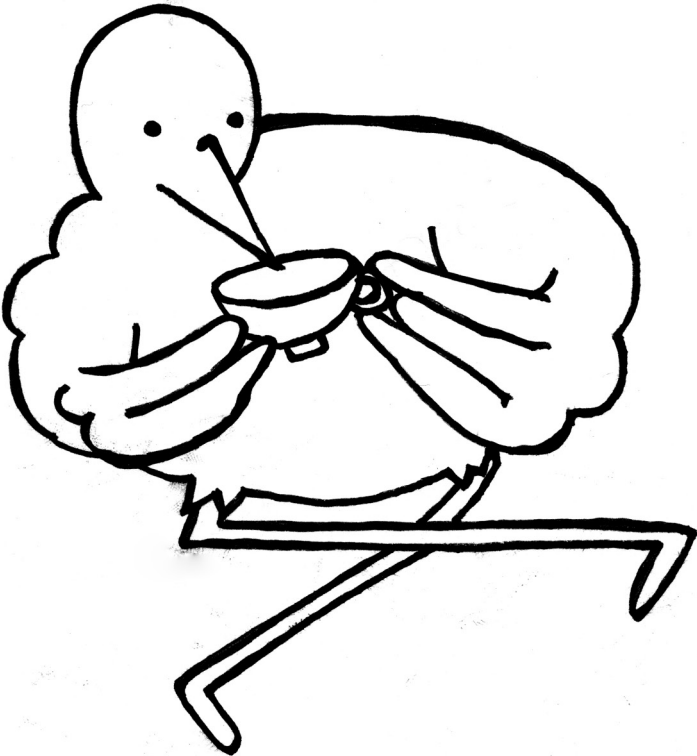
when that rapist guard came up to me I knocked out at him and said how I was a pretty good artist and I would draw him ladies if he would gimme his pen for a while and he said ok so first I drew some ladies but since I was all in jail I wasn't feeling the sexytimes so they didn't come out so, so I started writing on all the old court notes I'd got that day in the garbage and hoping the guy had fallen and got hurt so I could keep his pen

...

then they gave me back my clothes while a stupendous thug obviated that I'd have to pay for the sheet I'd shredded to hang myself with and I put my cow suit back on from a box and then put on deodorant and realized how I'd just gotten a toothbrush and some white shreds for \$1,200 and I was happy about that cause it seemed like a pretty good deal so I started brushing my teeth as I sat down and slowly came to the realization in my ears that there were fifteen govt thugs at the desk in front of me all sort of lounging and taking turns saying "penis" "penis" "penis" sort of nonchalantly and

it was just raw and baffling and gave me a whole new perspective on law enforcement. So they took me out calling me the stinky cow and I was sayin' how I was the Stink Cow too an then I walked out the door to my friends who had set me free and I did another flip and we held tight and it wasn't no easy thing for them either to figgur me out of that.

I guess, then, that I think a lot of people don't do things they would do cause they get scared of going to jail. And I don't mean it's hella rosy or hella bad, like anything I guess anything can happen and its for sure hella boring or what, right, but I think in general it's not something that people should be afraid of, or something that they should let stop them from doing things they want to do or let the fear of it bully their ideas around.



Rosalie Eck



DEATH MOTION

Amanda Goldstein

MAYFLY

she held brief hands to the
sunlight; wrists cocked like a painter's
the skein of her braid

then

pendulous

in the cold

I found

a note she left me when
she left me

a purple blossom which
reminded me of her face
in winter :

here

standing restless falciform (
in the great puppy light of morning
pocketed hands rain - spotted
sidewalks sun rise
& God) I felt

so old against the dew.

spring:

a purgatory of dervish
>>> black - eyed - susans
whirling incommensurate
swans

there are few (

things

)

in this ephemerid dawn

more difficult to

bear only one
of which I know —

{

mayfly mayfly *mayfly*

mayfly

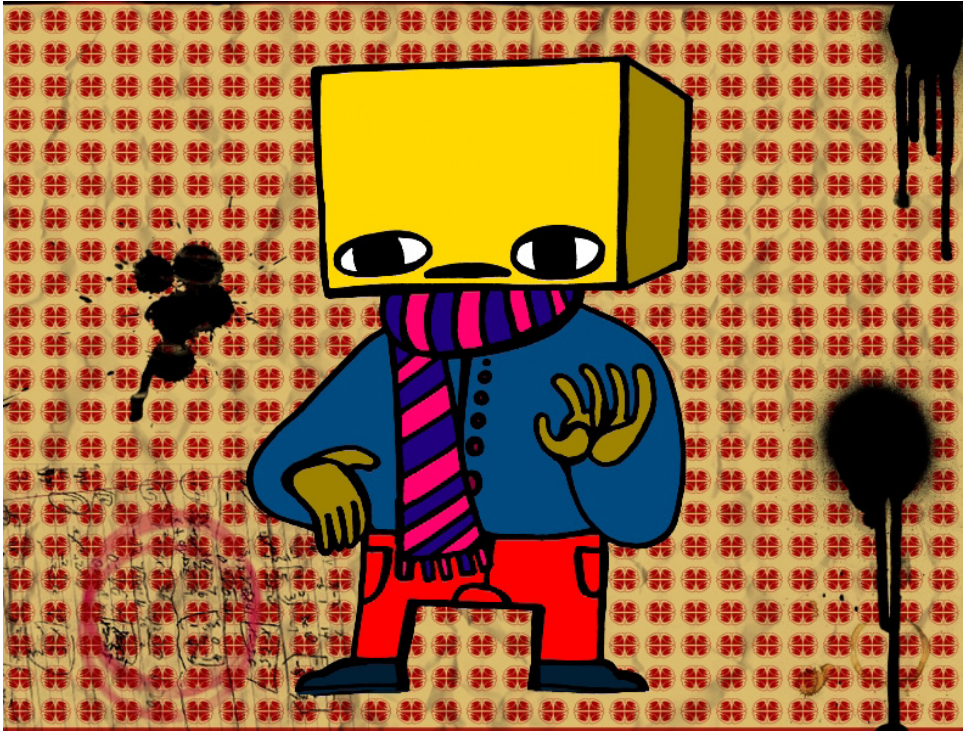
& row back the wind

}

it is

easier to love you
now than when you

were here



SAMMY

Robben Muñoz

Dear Readers:

What are we looking for, I wonder.
my skin tingled with goosebumps, and
unreasonable banshee whoops
like clouds...as if underwater
There are few things more difficult

Later, they will thank these frames, and
realize what a burden just holding the thing would be.

I've found it wanting
I too am looking for a home.
And I don't mean it's hella rosy or hella bad,

Do not mention the
LAUSSofDiReCtAcTiOn
you will have no more of me.

I give them close care and strange pity
The only thing to do here is to gaze at them day and night.
or we might forget
how long can we, and when

Afterwords you're encouraged to visit
No—how about something I wrote, instead?
it's always hard to say these things to someone else

For now, you are mine
and we sort of rustled
how long can you keep me / one more

YES, WHORE WE MIGHT

Your harshest look, without shadow or color.
Who is this feverless guest suddenly in you?

This is not a baby.
He, with dry lips
by a young woman who has lost.

los espejos son abominables,
all of this: i've found it wanting

I don't smoke. Is it important to say that?

for thirteen years inside the earth
You kneel / but only to get a better angle

(Later, they will thank these frames
& row back the wind

—*it's we* *us*

my blue-dog nights
ofthWILD", ofthewild, thewild

I am afraid to close my hands / on you,
the fresh marigolds)

YES INDEED.

Adam Chambers & Rosemary Bateman
Layout Editors

ABOUT THE TYPEFACE
USED IN THIS EDITION

“His apartments are elegant; his staircase is particularly curious; and the room in which he dines, and calls his smoking-room is very handsome; the grate and furniture belonging to it are, I think, of bright wrought iron and cost him a round sum...”

[http://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=Auj6qqfoKGY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Auj6qqfoKGY)