TAB

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Design Statement

The annual, distinctive print issue of *TAB: The Journal of Poetry & Poetics* engages the reader with poetry as a material object and asks the reader to negotiate between image and text. The design does not assume a traditional role of quietly framing content; instead, design actively shapes the reading experience and continues to experiment with and explore the intersections between form and content, object and space, and reader and reading.

The 2019 print issue was *Tab Journal's* first issue driven by inclusive design and low-vision principles. With this new print issue, we extend our effort to create an engaging and increasingly equitable experience for all abilities based on inclusive design.

This 2022 volume is our tenth issue. It is no coincidencethat this volume, in both the print and online issues, echoes the durability and usefulness of aluminum and tin, the traditional tenth anniversary gifts. This volume, launched with a large-format print issue, reflects and shines and is our gift—from the staff and the contributors—to literary culture.

The design for this year's *Tab Journal* emerges from a year of recognizing the complexities of choice, drawing boundaries, and acknowledging multidimensional anxieties of being between a rock and a hard place. As we continue to experience the compromises that go hand in hand with the pandemic, as we continue to face the relentless considerations of safe and dangerous spaces, this volume surveys concepts of shared corners and shelters, of physical and metaphorical places and spaces where individuals, pods, and communities take refuge.

The visual language in this volume draws on the mining of minerals—Arsenopyrite, Aluminum, Platinum, Tin, Tennantite, Titanium, Silver, Volcanic Rock—and a back-and-front scientific identification system to connect author and poem. The January print issue was digitally printed with two colors of ink (metallic and black), then scored, die-cut, and folded to achieve a

poster booklet. It is, then, two forms in one, poster and booklet, each of which offers a different visual and tactile experience of scale and perspective. The online issues extend the visual design and transform it—rather than replicate it—for the screen.

To request one or more copies of the print issue, please use the Contact form on the *Tab Journal* website.

Allison Blevins

Allison Blevins (she/her) is the author of the collections *Handbook for the Newly Disabled, A Lyric Memoir* from BlazeVox this year; *Slowly/Suddenly* from Vegetarian Alcoholic Press; and four chapbooks. Blevins is the Director of Small Harbor Publishing and the Executive Editor at *the museum of americana*. See more at www.allisonblevins.com.

Joshua Davis

Joshua Davis (he/him) is the author *Chorus for the Kill* from Seven Kitchens Press this year. He holds an MFA from Stonecoast at the University of Southern Maine and from the University of Mississippi. He offers online workshops and private mentoring at The Poetry Barn and teaches high school English near Tampa, Florida.

The Lionesses of the Mind Are Dangerous

After Ursula Le Guin

Yes, and so are the nettles, rain-green and unobtrusive,
and frogs like a palmful of smashed berries.

Everything in the mind shines with toxins. Everything
in the mind waits—*Can you hear me?*—no noise to ramble
itself to soft.
Everything in the mind sharpens. Everywhere
in the skin sheathed water-folding-electric lurks elbows and counter corners
and children's plastic figurines. *Can you hear me?*

Yes, and doesn't every animal trap what is beloved in its wet mouth
until the color leaches free, a pearl rubbed clean of shimmer?

The animals of the mind dig and linger, devour us and each other.

Talisman Against Divorce

Flowers seethe in a ceramic vase, blue-glazed and crackled,
but we—we are the lazy miracle of a Sunday afternoon.

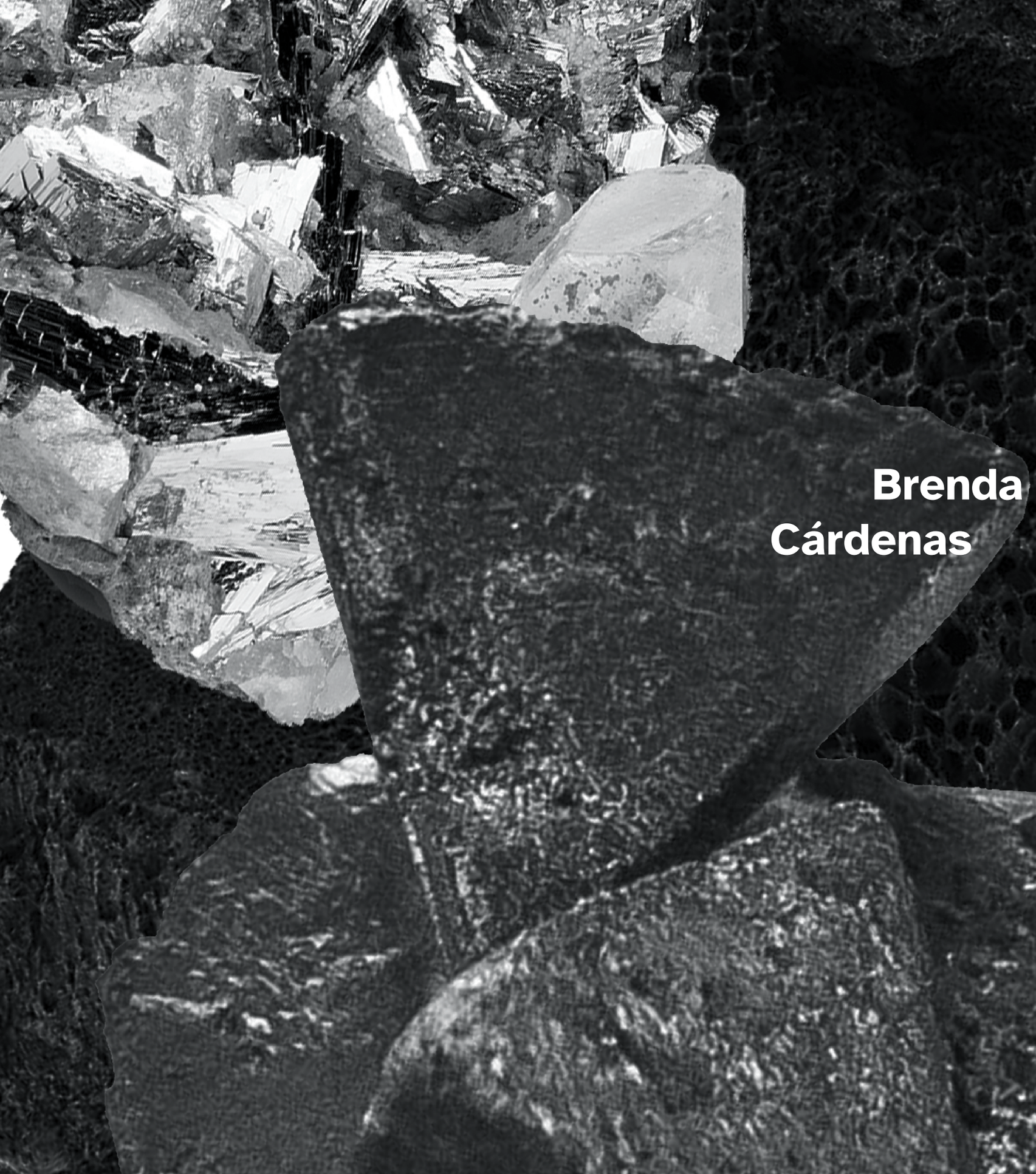
We are a hundred nights spent in our sons' feverish beds.
We are ice sheathed on branches and wires and sheets hot from the wash.

We are that rosary of loose stars, black and pollinated.
We are binoculars trained on female red birds we dare not describe as brown.

We are the folded wet washcloth, the forehead, and the blinding white aura.
We are grainy music, the stained pillowcase, the thousandth *I can't*.

We are growing bellies, pillows for a child's head.
We are the blush of remembering, last night you filled everything.

I still smell you on my face and hands.



Brenda Cárdenas

Brenda Cárdenas (she/her) is the author of Trace, forthcoming from Red Hen Press, *Boomerang* from Bilingual Press, and three chapbooks. She also co-edited *Resist Much/Obey Little: Inaugural Poems to the Resistance and Between the Heart and the Land: Latina Poets in the Midwest.* Cárdenas teaches Creative Writing and Latinx Literature at University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee.

Bucketsful

When I was a child, I had a rusty bucket-
ful of ochre wonder, of mustard seed
and yarrow, jasper stone and finch
feather, of butterscotch and hopscotch,
botched tongues and dizzy syntax.

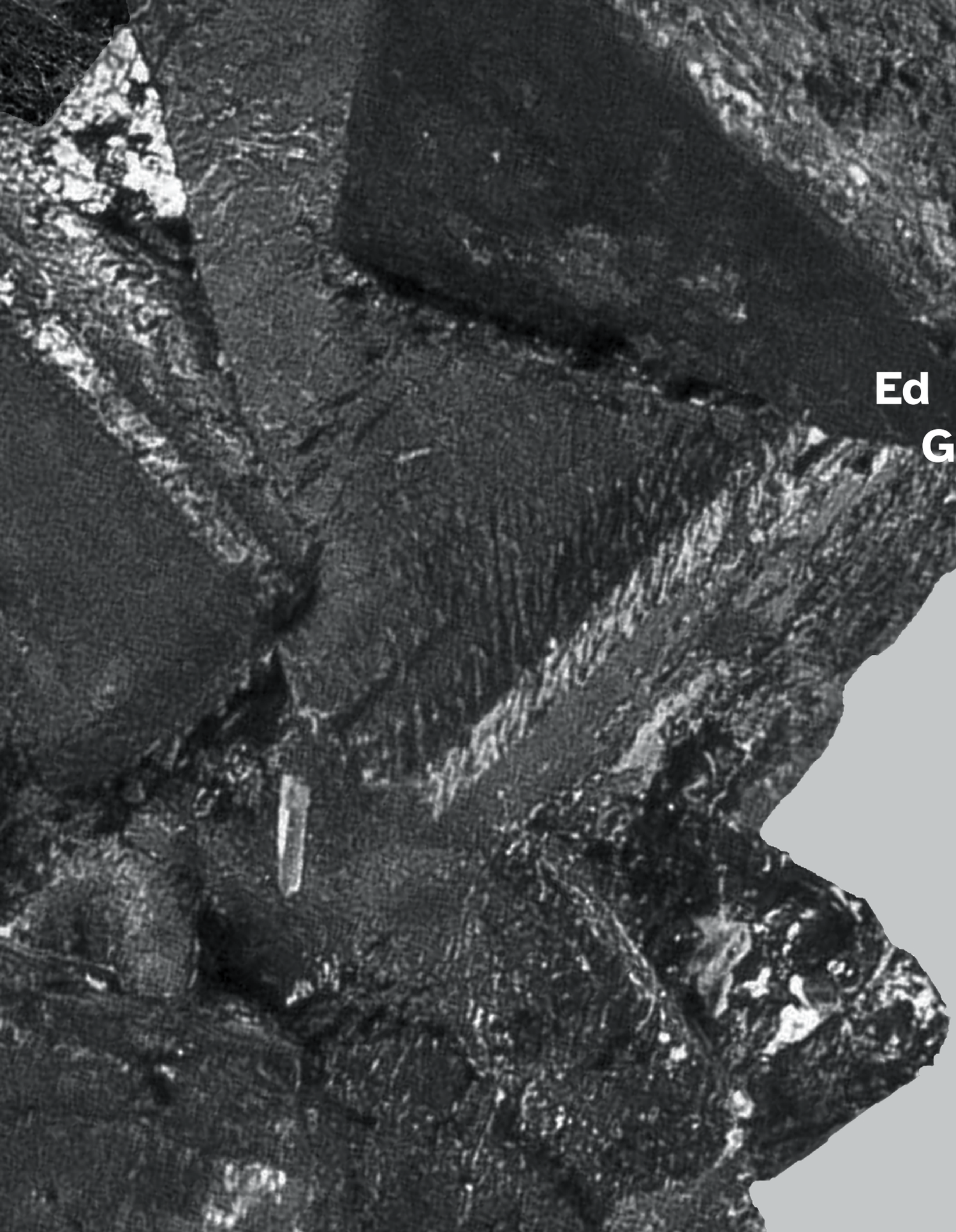
Bullies dumped it all over the sidewalk,
their pimpled hiccups echoing
under overpasses while pigeons pecked
at the granular wreckage, and the finch
feather flew south in search of its bird.

Others stuffed my bucket with snarls
and suffocating toadlets, ravenous
revulsion and arrogant sermons.
One held a bucketful of Jesus to the sky,
and the buckets multiplied.

I snuck away with the ugly bucket
scratched by stars, dented by dark clouds,
the lonely one ready to carry friends

like shells and seeds, water and bone,
caterpillars, ladybugs, mud and stone.

Ed Go



Ed Go's (he/him) work has appeared in several print and online journals including *Blue as an Orange, In Between Altered States, Hinchas de Poesia,* and others. His chapbook *Deleted Scenes from the Autobiography of Ed Go as told by Napoleon Id* was published by Other Rooms Press, and "new machines," a sequence of twenty-one prose poems appears in the anthology *Urgent Bards* from Urbantgarde Press.

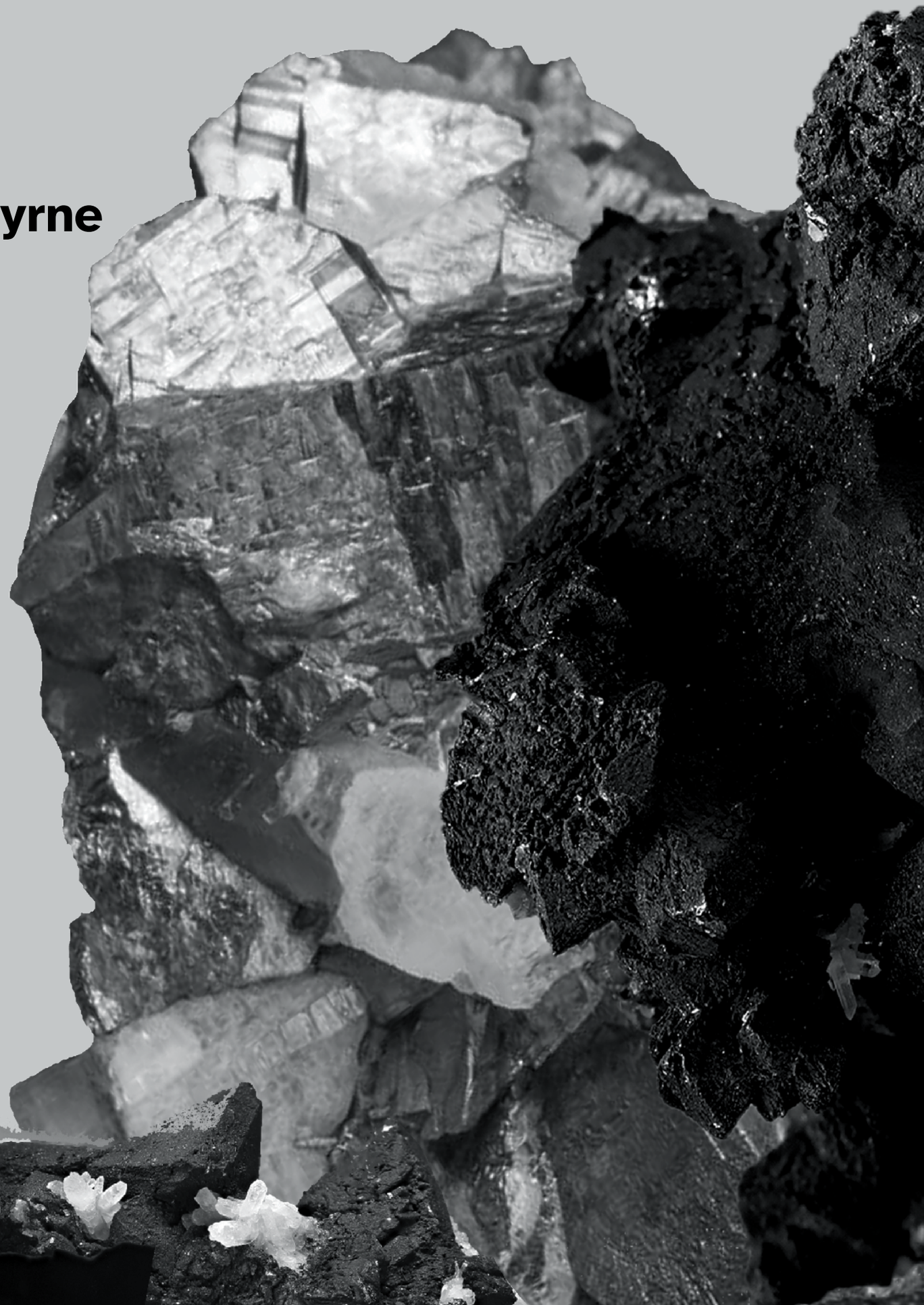
an essence always is lost in translation, but also an essence is thereby created:

because femur
because lampposts
because rumors
readable in mockcharts
made of aluminum
and manganese. copious carafes of palm oil
grassing in the greaser.
whether wetter or winter, blighted by
bog: treelined view of a monstrous mound
—climb because challengable / challenge because clomb—
because it's there.
because winter
because windstorm
because plasma is sold in cereal
snowflakes melt in the bottle—
because postmark
because pain
or lemurs less likely to go with your flow
go with your lemurs
you go with the lemurs you go

settle your eyes and crunch on it, bend: lend
or the hand the man bouts with and bend
one primate alighted, in
fire in wind in pinecones in fire
one primate goes higher; you follow its nouns:
degender their stickforks and also these spoonbowls
chemistry cripples you fostering fostering
coastal embargo spoonbowls piñatas
farmer in grievance at factory muscle
factual meaningful carving is futile
chemistry proves it by bits and [by]product
as cult is to culture so rhyme is to rhythm
as happenstance means you are the last primate, a
hasbeen or whatwas or
patterns of usage to patterns neglected
excretions from venus, a
delta an alpha an epsilon a shibboleth
and boys who were pretty and girls who were tired go now and go, and leave back your lemur, regrets are for babies and caps are for zealots as boy is to nepal or woman to everest; so let it be woven in rickshaw and whitecrane that womb is as wombat as is is in issue—or how do they primal or format or nothing? that's where we ended; let this be your winter: a passage; a prescience, approval; a predicate

Alicia Byrne Keane

Alicia Byrne Keane's (she/her) poetry has been published in *The Moth, The Colorado Review, The Scores, Orbis, Bayou, Banshee,* and *The Cardiff Review,* among others. Keane was the featured poet for *The Stinging Fly*'s Winter Issue 45 and has been nominated for Pushcart and Best of the Net Prizes.



Botanical Sketching

After Maria Prymachenko

I begin in the thinnest green
to mark the place where leafblade
becomes air. Describe,
as in ‘to describe a circle’,
‘to describe an arc’:
I omit the wrapped centre
from which leaves furl
and the tangle loosens,
no longer represents
the line from ground to sun.
I favour the uncomplicated
blooms: florets ungrasping
in patio cracks,
seedlings nearly planar
as the plant emoji. I have to make
myself attempt the toothy leaves,
a thing like dandelion
that creases, drips across the page.
Still, I am thinking of sunflowers

in their neat wheels, the yellow
between sprigs a flat ocean,
a dream-world where flowers lean
taller than horses, pigs sit
on their haunches in an abundance
of new blooms, sweet pea.
Where the leaves are halved
in keeping with the sunlight;
petals beak from buds.

Looking

After Frank O'Meara's 'Towards Night and Winter'

The grass is the teal of lake-water or a tarnishing
the lake is a disc burnt white
the bullrushes match trees thinned on the slope
the cloth is held between finger and thumb
the summer falls in sparks or islands
the shadow is kept in the centre of a hand
the language (mine) falls like a deadening
like drops of water from fingertips
(into a larger body of water)
people say a second language will come back easily
friends say there are no people in my poems
the crisped leaves are bellied in an apron or shift
the hand is blurred into a thing like a vowel
the lake could be part of a large, painted word
the day has often left like this
not that I record it in these terms
(the houses give little away)

Orlando Ricardo Menes

Orlando Ricardo Menes (he/him), Professor of English at the University of Notre Dame, is the author of seven poetry collections, including *The Gospel of Wildflowers & Weeds* from University of New Mexico Press this year and *Fetish* from University of Nebraska Press and winner of the 2012 Prairie Schooner Book Prize in Poetry.

How Not to Build a Model Rocket

Miami, 1970

Anglo boys owned X-Actos, spray cans, and hobby files.
I had Mamá's paring knife, nail polish, garlic rasp.
I cut the tail fins beyond those little moon-round tabs,
and my rocket began to lean as a pine tree in a swamp.
Always cement on the inside, instructions command,
But I veered off laying down globs on the thrust and tank.
The words *clockwise, counterclockwise* stumped my ESL
(*Wise* to me was a brand of potato chips from Food Spot),
So I made many wrong turns assembling the strict stages.
And when I unhinged the hinges, stripped the twist straps,
Even the simplest modules failed to align in disgrace.
My rocket was no Saturn but Frankenstein's monster,
But I made amends with Scotch tape and rubber bands
Until my creation could wangle a pass from boys
Who engineered supersonics from balsa wood and foil.
I persevered still more against my immigrant tongue,
Tweezing out false cognates, filing down my *vocales*
To Yankee schwas, polishing my hard b's to soft v's
So that the kids at school stopped making donkey sounds,

And soon I was unbound by the gravity of my Spanishness,
Giddy as Neil Armstrong stomping on the moon.

Salvador Dalí with Anadromes

After his siesta, Dalí staggers to steep clove tea,
Fry up thistles, lentils, one ostrich egg to eat
On Good Friday at three when tsunamis of doom
Crash the ramparts of reason, & the sour mood
Of Spanish nuns inspires Dalí to paint raw
Oysters with Camembert, food for amorous war
As when cupids & pachyderms tussle in a pool
Of warm, moonlit butter & Gala braids a loop
Of lucky lust from the boys' golden curls to ward
Off winter's impotence, then pokes Dalí to draw
With one eye the talisman of their love (a wen
Of crickety currants in sweet dough) to coax the new-
Born Venus who gets dolled up in tempera, a drib
Of cuttlefish ink, red ash of the phoenix bird.

Dan Murphy

A former carpenter, Dan Murphy (he/him) teaches at Boston University. He recently served as Writer-in-Residence at Phillips Academy. A past Robert Pinsky Global Fellow and Grace Abernathy Scholar, his poems appear or are forthcoming in *Sugar House Review, The Summerset Review, The Adirondack Review, Slipstream, Terrain,* and elsewhere.

Comhartha

Dordéan beag,
liathróid ag faoileáil,
anam dúchasach—

Cén uair a bheas tú ag caochadh?
Tá an t-uisce milis san aer anois
cosúil le mo mhamó.

Cén saghas nuacht a thugann tú?
Inis dom. Inis dom. Ní chloiseann na daoine
taobh amuigh dá suíocháin.

In aice láimhe, téann tú amú
ag déanamh staidéir ar a sholas dearg,
ag déanamh staidéir air ró-fhada b'fhéidir.

Comhartha

Little hummingbird,
knuckleball in flight,
indigenous soul—

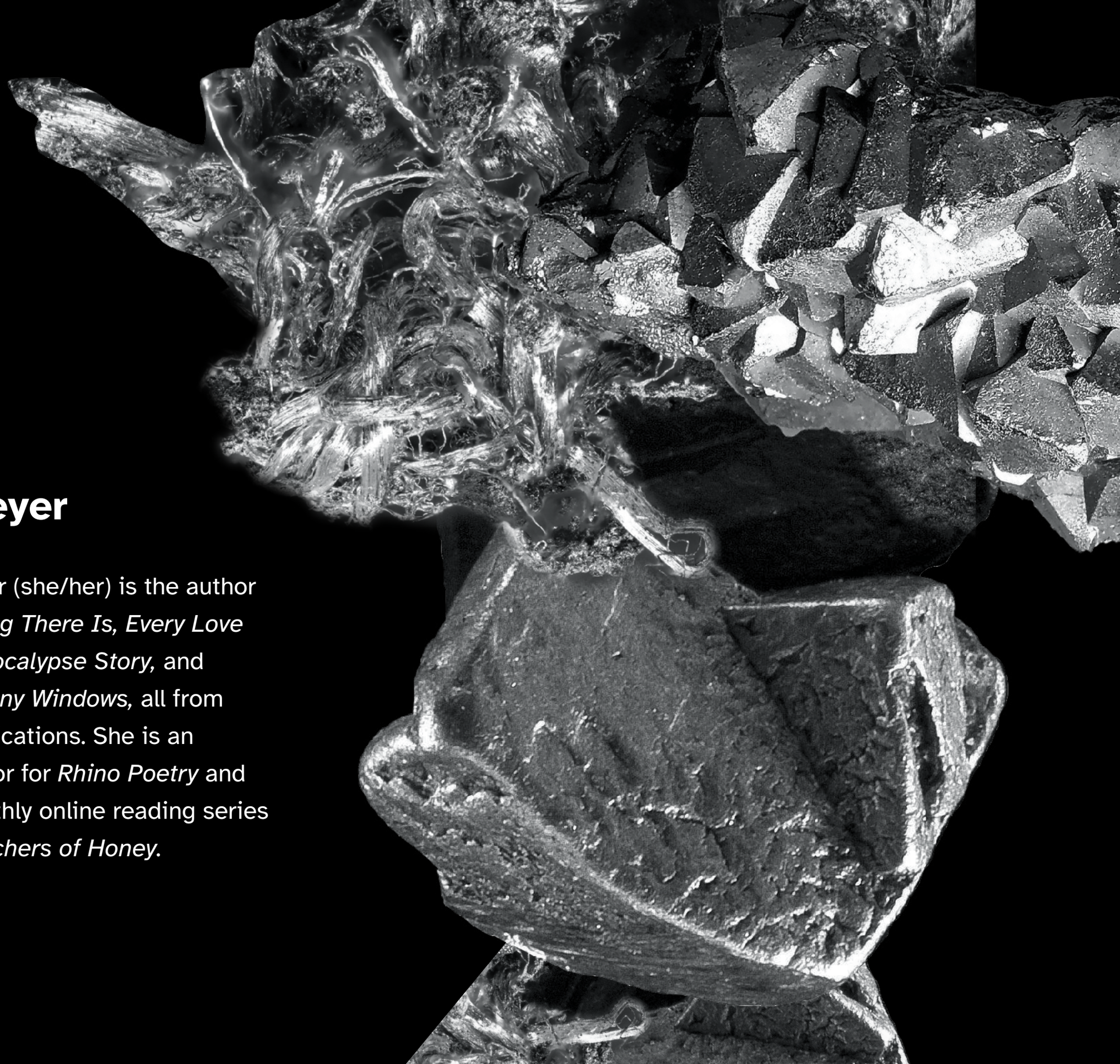
when do you blink?
The sweetwater is air now
like my grandmother.

What news do you bring?
Tell me. Tell me. The people in pews
can't hear you out here.

By my turn signal, you linger
studying its ruby glint,
studying it, perhaps, too long.

Donna Vorreyer

Donna Vorreyer (she/her) is the author of *To Everything There Is, Every Love Story is an Apocalypse Story,* and *A House of Many Windows,* all from Sundress Publications. She is an associate editor for *Rhino Poetry* and hosts the monthly online reading series *A Hundred Pitchers of Honey*.



Orchard After Storm

with lines from Edna St. Vincent Millay

Bark streaked black by last night's fury,
the trees hang heavy with yield and memory,
leaves dripping in syncopated rhythm.

I reach up for a pear, its yellow slick
and sinister, bittersweet. But I pull back
and leave it on the branch, remembering

the poet said *he who would eat of love must*
eat it where it hangs. I walk the broken wall
alone, smell the smoke of brushwood

still too damp to catch. Fallen unripe harvest
like stones beneath my feet, first casualties
of the sky's unrest, and *I see so clearly how*

my life must run—the griefs that will repeat,
the bloom and fall, the ruined remains. And now
the kiss of rain again, its mist full of ghosts.

You are not here, not by my side nor in
the smoke nor in the gloom. I begin to pluck
the pears. *Far and wide, ladders lean among the fruit*.

Afterglow

Last night I drove a long stretch of road with no street lamps
and little traffic, the sensation of floating in a dark tank
or curling inside a Rothko, both engulfed and held back
at the same time. This morning, I ran through soft rain,
brushed against a scribble of trailside branches, their seed pods
rattling *trust me, trust me, spring is coming and soon it will be*
beautiful but for now there is only the wet bite of winter
in the air, water from my shoes dripping into lines shaped
like my mother's face. I do not clean them up. I cannot lose her
again. Three years, and I find her everywhere, her light hiding
in the fire, in the sink, in the sky backlit by stars.
But it's the rain that gets me. This is how mourning works:
the night she died, I ate a pretzel, soft and warm, summer
rain on the roof. Tonight, I shiver and still taste the salt.

Kory Wells

Kory Wells (she/her) is the author of *Sugar Fix* from Terrapin Books. Her writing has been featured on *The Slowdown* podcast and appears in The *Strategic Poet, SWWIM,* and elsewhere. A software developer turned community arts advocate, she also mentors poets through the from-home mentorship program MTSU Write.

Postcard from the Cusp of No Way Back

In a country where we dared not drink the water,
the water washed up treasure on the shore:
A Traveler's Guide to Magic. We claimed
its sodden pages, ignored the fine print,
conjured a cab and fancy dinner, wine
and a hothouse rose. As if we needed another thorn.

We wanted to believe a roving mariachi band
could trumpet away a jade ring's curse.
We wanted redemption for our island
getaway gone every way wrong—reservations lost,
our plastic cards worthless, no way
in those days to phone home. This was before

the world was so wired and concrete was more common
than trees. Before each storm outstormed the last.
In those days we thought it enough to dream
of marriage, children, maybe a business of our own.
We didn't imagine our imaginations pallid
and languageless as our bodies in that unrelenting sun.

Paradise was still under construction. Constantly
workers clanged steel on the shell of a high-rise nearby.
The sound should've been a warning, but to us it meant
At home the sunnybells sway among stones. We quit talking.
Empty bottles accumulated in our darkened room.
The porter kept slipping amount due notices under our door.

The yellow sunnybell is a kind of lily that thrives in cedar glades and, thanks to conservationists, has been protected by the state of Tennessee for several decades.

Kirby Olson

Kirby Olson (he/him) is a professor at SUNY Delhi in the western Catskills. His books include studies of Gregory Corso and Andrei Codrescu. His poems have appeared in *Poetry East, Partisan Review, Cortland Review, First Things*, and many others. He has published four other essays on Marianne Moore.

Marianne Moore and Style

Marianne Moore's poem "Style" first appeared in the journal *The Listener* on April 12, 1956. Moore mentions on 8 April 1956 in a letter to Elizabeth Bishop, "I have had quite a time getting anyone to publish one of the pieces (on Escudero and Dick Button)...The New Yorker couldn't take it" (Moore VA: 01: 06). Unlike her poems about baseball or her poems about World War II, "Style" references figures unknown to all but a small coterie. Vicente Escudero was a flamenco dancer. Dick Button was an ice skater who was the first to land a triple axel (in 1948). Pierre Etchebaster was the long-reigning champion of a little-known sport called court tennis, which differs slightly from lawn tennis in the racquets, the courts, the balls, and the scoring. It is now played in only about fifty surviving gyms in the world. In every case, the artists and sports stars are compared through style and, in particular, with the style of animals. For instance, "Etchebaster's art, his *catlike* ease, his *mousing* pose, / his genius for anticipatory tactics [...]." (*Complete Poems* 169; my emphasis).

Moore compares the sports player with various guitarists and dancers and closes the distinction so that animals, artists, and athletes are all juggled. In her earlier work, we get a menagerie of creatures: often in movement, and there are also references to artistry in these. There are poems such as "The Monkeys," "The Frigate Pelican," "The Plumet Basilisk," "No Swan So Fine," "The Jerboa," "Snakes, Mongooses, Snake-Charmers and the Like," "An Octopus," and many others. She begins her poem "To a Snail," "If 'compression is the first grace of style,' / you have it" (CP 85). *Style* is also an abiding focus in her earlier poems such as "The Pangolin," "Elephants," and "Critics and Connoisseurs." She is often segueing between human and animal styles, as she finds similarity between a peacock and a dancer in "Arthur Mitchell," or between a

puma and the batter Elston Howard in “Baseball and Writing.”

In a long interview with George Plimpton from 1964 in *The Complete Prose,* Moore discusses athletic feats that take us beyond the human contemplation of athletic style and argues that animals also contribute to the evolving beauty of form. She mentions actions by gibbons, elephants, and even mentions a poodle she had seen in the series *Flipper* (683). In her horse racing poems, she sees horses as artists, and in the notes on the poem “Tom Fool,” she cites Canadian jockey Ted Atkinson on his famous horse, which he rode into immortality. Atkinson said that Tom Fool “was a creative horse with many different styles of running” (*Complete Poems* 286).

In a letter to her brother Warner written in June 1956, Moore describes a visit to the Central Park Zoo in Manhattan:

> I don’t ever look at apes if I can help it, but 2 gorillas were exercising in their enclosure & the big one roused my fervent admiration. This huge grumpy cumbersome tree-man sprang like a bird from a sitting position up on to the swing —up into a roost on the swing and performed a few violent gyrations and leaped like a feather to the ground—lighting so pleasantly she seemed almost to float. Next was a huge embittered Bengal tiger—a big female—green eyes & lithe body—it gazed right through me—with a pitiless abstracted gaze—padding purposefully up and down.
>
> I then found the baby elephants—half-grown now. They kept so close they were jostling each other at every step. A more inexperienced eye I never saw than in

those elephants.

> The zoo is an Elysium—emerald gray twittering birds—sunny walks and pleasant breezes. (Family Correspondence VI: 40: 19, June 1956)

Moore utilizes style as a litmus test for what should be canonical. What is *style*? In his book *Beyond a Boundary,* Trinidadian critic C.L.R. James argues that what audiences come to see in a cricket game is *style*ˆ: "Another name for the perfect flow of motion is style, or, if you will, significant form" (206). James cites Michelangelo's drawing "Hercules Struggling with a Lion" as key to Berenson's aesthetics (205). James writes, "Mr. Berenson, in the books I have mentioned, nowhere analyses this momentous fact: the enormous role that elemental physical action plays in the visual arts throughout the centuries" (205).

In one of her earliest poems, Moore features the desert rat in "The Jerboa," and compares its leap to a musical composition. "Its leaps should be set / to the flageolet" (15).

In the final letter in her *Selected Letters* to the poet Elizabeth Bishop, Moore is reading Lamarck and Darwin and other naturalists such as Cuvier and Humboldt. Moore's lifelong interest in animal elegance raises many questions. Are animals artists insofar as artists are consciously setting out to achieve elegance or what C.L.R. James called "significant form"?

In the book *Monkey Painting,* French scholar Thierry Lenain discusses the role of chimpanzees in paintings. As early as the 1950s, monkey paintings (paintings by monkeys) were made and disseminated through galleries and were appreciated by Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali, and other surrealists. However, Lenain writes, "A monkey painting is not a work of art" (183). Also, animals are not critics, according to Lenain. "The effect of our game of artistic contemplation on

his work leaves the monkey cold, just as the monkey's indifference to the finished work remains incomprehensible to us" (185). Style, or significant form, is something that remains relevant only within the human world. Lenain writes that it is tempting to overextend a welcome to animal creations within the realm of art and suggests that it is probably due to environmentalists, "who have a tendency to dispute man's preeminent position in the living world. The ideological atmosphere established by such arguments favours the increasing recognition of the dignity of animal life in all its richness" (99). Was Moore such an environmentalist? If so, then why does she also approve of those who wear furs, which she appears to celebrate in the early poem "New York," which lists ermine, foxes, deer skins, beaver, otter, and puma as wonderful things to wear. Moore approved of people who wear other creatures' skins, so that although she celebrates animals and their ingenuity, she does not think of them as equal to humans because she would doubtless disapprove of humans wearing humans' skins.

Are animals necessarily creatively lesser beings? Lenain argues that monkeys cannot generate "forms" but seem to be able to create only "visual intervention" (169).

Gregory Bateson, in his *Steps to an Ecology of Mind,* argues that while animals might not understand law, they can understand simple abstract rules and presents them as slightly better than Lenain does. Working with porpoises, Bateson writes that a trainer developed Pavlovian responses in which a piece of behavior is rewarded with a fish. For instance, the porpoise might put its head above water. In another, the porpoise may flap its tail. After some time, a sequence of behaviors can be learned, Bateson writes. But there is a higher learning in which the porpoise was only rewarded if it demonstrated a behavior previously unseen in porpoises, in which case "the total experience may promote *creativity*" (278). What Bateson appears to support is novelty, which can be an aspect of aesthetics. Animal style can be classic, too, insofar as it remains the

same or similar for generation after generation. Snails haven't changed much since antiquity, nor have gorillas.

While her work with animals in her poetry may not be reducible to a single activist motto, we can try to understand how all of Moore's poems, singular as they may be in terms of their individual strategies, may share an ideal. To conserve a species or a work of art, there must first be appreciation of its style.

It is not known if animals themselves appreciate style, but in watching monkeys "monkeying about" in a zoo, it may be that they are similar to dancers or athletes trying to outdo one another in leaping and spinning. It is well known since the David Attenborough series *Our Planet* that the bird of paradise is a dancer, and its potential partners, critics. Moore's focus in the poem "Style" indicates that what James calls "significant form" and the appreciation of it is Moore's central criterion for conservation priorities in her later poetry.

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Note: Quotations from the Marianne Moore Archives at the Rosenbach Museum and Library are listed using their own system of references.

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Ian Koh

Ian Koh (he/him) moved to California for studies from Singapore several years ago. He is a Dual MFA/MA student at Chapman University. His work can be found in *Forth Magazine*, *Inkslinger*, and others.

Book review

The Hurting Kind by Ada Limón
Milkweed Editions, 2022

The Hurting Kind by Ada Limón is about the miraculous as it looks back on suffering and change. In these poems, there is something in the reflecting and the reflection that is about resilience and healing, which are just as essential as sleeping and breathing. Change is its own process. It can seem chaotic, or it can be appreciated, seeing the miracles in the changing of the seasons, which is also how the sections in this collection are structured. To see change as miraculous is admirable because it nourishes appreciation of patience and love instead of revealing endurance as gullibility and foolishness.

In nature, there seems to be solidarity and empathy, essential for the forming of any kind of conviction. These poems allow for the kind of anticipation people want to experience. There lies the miraculous in the closeness with nature, the similarities, the reflection. The collection opens with a groundhog moving fluidly towards the narrator's tomatoes and taking "pleasure in the watery bites" ("Give Me This"). In the trespass, the creature seems to bring forth delight in the simplicity of doing things for survival. "Why am I not allowed / delight?" the narrator muses as a human. Why can't a tomato bring similar pleasures? Do humans choose to suffer rather than simply survive? More importantly, why does the narrator revel in the groundhog's presence instead of chasing it away from the tomatoes? A stranger requests the narrator's thoughts on suffering, and the narrator feels like there is "Barbed wire pulled out of the mouth." Humans are often obsessed over their suffering to the point of excess. Perhaps through nature, one starts

to see wonder in the simplicity of survival. This creature in the garden pulls the narrator into solidarity with nature and keeps the narrator longing for a better outlook on life. Furthermore, this connection to nature has implications for human relationships when the narrator insists in the book'sclosing poem, "enough of the animal saving me, [...] / I am asking you to touch me" ("The End of Poetry").

It is human to change, and Limón's poetry describes this desire as something irresistible and, in "Foaling Season," as "our selfishness." Perhaps, the foal is a reference to a place or time prior to maturing. The foal is a reflection of the narrator; the foal has a mean bite. The bites remind the narrator of themself, so the narrator stays a while to try to placate the foal with affection in order to curb its biting tendency. There is something in this momentary exchange—this momentary truce—that suggests the narrator is trying to find space for deep and meaningful thought as if dwelling upon a truth. The foal starts to grow restless and again bites the narrator: "he wants / to teach me something, to get me / where it hurts." Dealing with suffering is to reflect upon the stubbornness of one's own nature. People's own histories tend to stray and revert back to the old. Dwelling, in this case, is not a bad thing, because it allows reflection as if cleansing. Nature's reminders are healthy and irresistible because they help people prioritize something more valuable in wonder. Nature wants to build a relationship and make room for new processes.

What's miraculous about change is that it requires feats of learning to let go of a certain, stubborn position. Change is also about the transformation, and there is nothing mundane about undergoing transformation. In "Cyrus & The Snake," the narrator writes, "I want to honor a man who wants to hold a wild thing, / only for a second, long enough to admire it fully, / and then wants to watch it safely return to its life." The object of the poem is a snake that "snakes as snakes / do," a snake that reflects a struggle as snakes sometimes do, "their strong bodies

wrapping themselves around / the warmth of his arm." The line breaks also suggest the snake is "both a noun and a verb," repelling and leaving no space for the nature of the other. The man in this poem is the narrator's brother, to whom the tribute is paid for eventually releasing the snake unharmed, a representation of maturity in redefining something adversarial. The paradox is that this is not a triumph over the snake, but over one's own tendencies—the snake is only as adversarial as the confrontation it faces. The lesson here is about growing out of one's old self: "he was tired / of history, of always discovering the ruin by ruining / it."

Looking back, suffering too can seem a lot like becoming more gentle and less in turmoil. The process is filled with struggle and coming to terms with a mutual understanding of adversarial natures. A looking back at one's self creates a reflection, two images looking at each other. In the act of reflection, there is transformation. In the act of seeing oneself in nature, as in *The Hurting Kind,* there is wonder and an appreciation of the process of transformation: a catalyst for change and growth as the new self was being forged and continues to be forged experience by experience, poem by poem.