

Allison Grayhurst

Circle

Breathing into a brown paper bag, responsibilities
weighing me down, spreading out, hiding
in my speech, making up lies to
lie across me bare-chest and crushing.

I've slept in a pantry with roaches and a window
with a full view of an unkempt backyard,
but never did I suspect that my love would wane,
polarizing my impulses and my apathy.
There was only one choice, a card turned and midnight
streaming into my veins like celestial pull and light
into the astrologer.

Fighting is a fiddler playing — tension to maximize
the resulted genesis, or a room where rhymes
are written across the door frame.
In that room I clip my fingernails, waiting
for admittance to foreplay, something
to electrify my sinews and sing.

Intimacy is a garden to plant or to let flourish
on its own accord, with eatable weeds and dung beetles foraging.
Summer is slipping fast — with worry-wrought eyes, under satisfied.
Summer beats its sloppy heat on my shoulders, on eyelashes, volunteering
its blaze and affirming breath.

I remember how it happened, listening
to lost friends voices on an answering machine. Some I wish
I never lost, most just conjure memory without emotion,
sure of why the break occurred, and glad
it did.

Drip, drip dreams betrayed,
looking over old books in an old bookshop, where
I used to treasure the smell and the surprise.

Ghosts enter me, collect and layer,
amplifying their mass, personal
tangibility.

Age does not slow or still desires.
Age does not make both arms free. I am the same,

as when my phantom wings expanded,
extended,
past hydro wires and mating cardinals, touching
the misty tip of a cumulus cloud.

