

Bitter Ode

Your blue eye gleams
like salamander skin; it
pushes forth no tear or trace
of exhaustion. Your veins throb
to life against your forearms
like tamed snakes.

Pick up an apple, but don't bite.
Stare at the sky
and try to imagine clouds
as ships, rabbits, dragons,
like you and your sister did,
backs against the lawn during your tenth summer.

Breathe a stream of white steam
into stark winter.
Open your arms to Pacific
sunshine, and drink
in your good fortune.

Stand before the black monolith,
press your palm against the names engraved.
Pick a flower, say
"not good enough."
Worth is not universal, it's personal.

Light a joint, take
a swig, give yourself a little more life.
Bite your lip, tug
your earlobe, see
how the sun reflects ripples from a pool of water,
and how even light hides scars
from ten feet away.