

Alex Stolis

Suzanne Frischkorn listens closely

to every note of *exile in guyville* and when nothing moves but the clock
she reminds herself of broken windows and the half moon eyes
of her children

watching her every move. she waits to see the lesson in the way
an ash curves from an abandoned cigarette, reaches out to touch
his arm

feels the cold snap of truth. snatches of new york conversation
climb to the back of her memory and there's the sound of a dime
dropping into an antique jukebox.

the scratch as needle hits vinyl--a pop a click and everything starts
to sound like a divorce song. she falls slowly back into herself
and disappears without a trace

Michaela Gabriel is in love

with the wrong ideas--she forgets that pride means nothing, forgets
it is always easiest to think around someone else's problem.

when everything fails count the number of times you've been drunk
at the movies, talked back to the screen and realized nothing makes sense

like loneliness. fill the day with glasses and straight edged plans,
white lines will take care of the hours and the minutes will leak seconds

until there is nowhere left to turn but up. she's mad about the wrong man,
the one that pictures himself in the back room watching her brush her hair,

each stroke a breath that interrupts the silence. in the end there is nothing left
but to drive headlong into forgiveness, the top down and radio blasting

John Vick sees his own death

as anti-climatic, a cliché to be erased
from the page. Once, he had a lover
who lived in a doll house

just another sidetracked
romance with thin paper walls
and faded posters.

misspent words hollowed out
his best intentions but jim beam
fills the empty spaces

just fine, fuck you very much.
now that it's too late to make up
for bent promises

he wonders about the meaning
of gravity--wishes that things left
unsaid didn't really exist .