

Haley Guariglia

Reservoir in the shallows

On days my hair stood end to end
crisp like falls gallant leaving
stringy pumpkin innards
halt blue expanse
longing, this feeling, for tempered shadows
and the big brass balloon

I wash in a tin tub
waiting for warmth
to inhale me, calm
keeper of the insidious
night I crawl beneath
every wrong move made

silence reverberates between clouds
nothing stares at me
I dry off with cattails
time does not wait or mind
there is much to fear
unprocessed weakness drowns

Death dreams under the cerulean sky, poolside

sun never sets on skin
skin settles for the sun

sunscreen caught in the cracks
carvings etched in blood

pool, palms, the widespread sky
sometimes paradise withholds

hatches spare stumps and limbs
lost my mind when I took a dip

a lifetime of ideations tow
a body unrecognizable

knives and nooses cloud
a mark of madness

on this exquisite perfection without
weights no way to explore the deep

new neurosis, symptoms who counts
three palms are erect and waving

wave back to ensure my limbs are still
attached by coarse black stitches

turn on my stomach, eye-level
the water a deep, velvet, maroon

my name is called by no one
I scribble to tether me to time

pains denouement; a cloud arrives
past selves carry present self to old

wounds, re open them and gouge
when death seems the only way out

of the gate I walk home
under the quintessential California sky

Pyrrhic

as we skipped down the chute my nightmare spat out
chain link destitution circled for group

layers cut like hair, that blunt
bob you see in the movies
have I ever been more famous
than to star in this roiling spectacle

we eat blue fish on pound cake
dithers of coffee grounds licked
clean off the dirt floor

is there time
to stay and say something
breath taking languorous cigarette breaks under the red roofed room

smoke curls a finger at the mental
a gold tooth for a 6 week stay

it may or may not be likely
men will use all they have to restrain
our hearts in thick slices

the last thing you'll hear from the matter on me is
volunteer

We group from noon til' three

morsels & molehills bitter
black coffee but there were lids
to cover each other's

boiling & slow to simmer
we watched each other weep
into years pulled

from pockets, offered behind earlobes
Pain! We shouted, unfair deity
whiplash truth. A succumbing

crawled the room & we
permitted intermittent attention
or held nothing

back and peeled raw
intensive, sensitive we punctured
holes in wounds, made banner

our hells. No & everyone wanted
more eulogies & elegies
it was a scarred scene

complicated by need & want
hearts were emptied, one by
one more than the few. Fear!

we stamped. Help fell around
like leaves arthritic
hands fail to grasp

we group from noon til' three
a graduation is expected
neither grand nor soon