

Maureen Mulhern

*Dust Mites*

Beneath our sleep  
A grand resort —  
Hijinks

In the mattress  
Pillows sheets  
With mouthparts

Agape  
For sloughed skin  
They tumble over

Each other a fandango  
To scale  
Our dander

*Rabbit Rabbit*

The foot slips down  
Through the shape-shifter's spine  
Good luck

Keychain  
Pocket-sunk amulet  
Hoodoo fighter

At the bottom of a mojo  
Or clustered  
Bright red

Green yellow orange  
In the clear belly  
Of a vending machine

\*

Bones crack  
As skin is pried  
And pelts flattened

To be sewn next to that  
Of a brother's brother's brother  
For warmth

\*

The kits hairless  
With eyes shut  
Turn in their nest

Outside the burrow  
Their mother  
Stills the grass

No one hears  
As night removes  
The colors of things

As she narrows  
In the field  
Of the owl's sight

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Brooding  
In its felt dome  
The charmed one

Is pulled out  
By the ears  
As limp as a sack of grain

*Rain*

Dark aquiver  
The rain is sweet  
And heavy

And almost green  
Cricket leg green  
Refreshing

As after a fever has gone  
A voice drones  
Into a new Galaxy

How the peonies bend  
With drops spiraling  
Into swollen

Disheveled faces  
Thick necks  
Behind their leaves

*Shall we cut them now*  
*Or in the sun*  
The phone is abuzz

With quietness  
A drop zone  
The rains bring in

*Anathema*

Truth is  
It happens  
Tongue on the third rail

It happens  
Napalm  
On a Zenith

Black and white  
Of course  
Truth is we knew

We didn't know  
It happens  
You knew

Something  
Of nothing then  
Truth is it happens

*Vacation*

I could hear the flowers  
Stretch in tepid violet air  
And the slush of rubber boots

On linoleum receding  
Winter was curled up  
At the windows

As I looked past  
The incinerator's  
Spray of crystals

Nuzzling the sky  
The corpses  
Glided by

In the basement  
On not too well oiled wheels  
Each was covered

With a white sheet  
They looked like moving landscapes  
Islands in the long corridor

I ran up the five flights  
To my desk and placed my thumb  
Over a day on the calendar

The shadow of my hand  
Fell against two weeks  
In the belly of July

*Persimmon*

When the mourning dove  
Looked at me  
In a calm daze

From window crash  
The clear circuit  
Of one gaze to another

Went through the glass  
I've seen that look before  
The cat calico and feral

The color of persimmon  
Chewed up the living dove  
And not too long after

Daffodils emerged  
In the tangle  
Of guts and feather