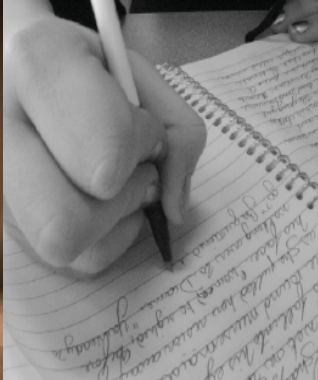




Boundary Street

Volume 8, Spring 2010
a CAPA | Carnegie Mellon Collaboration



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Acknowledgements

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Introduction

This chapbook is the result of a collaboration between students in the Advanced Poetry Workshop at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) and Literary Arts majors at The Pittsburgh High School for the Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA). Throughout the Spring 2010 semester, CMU students and CAPA students exchanged assignments and worked together on poems, meeting both at CMU and CAPA for workshop sessions and discussion. This collection of poems celebrates that collaboration. We all learned from each other, and we're all better writers, and teachers, because of this project. We hope you enjoy reading these poems as much as we enjoyed working together.

Mara Cregan, CAPA
 Jim Daniels, CMU
 Kristin Kovacic, CAPA

Sarelm Brooks

Time

Did you ever walk around your sands of time?
Beneath your white sheets,
lie your Ashla, your light
where your body walks away from me.
The white sheets returns as your body floats back.
They don't want it.
Leave it laying somewhere,
I don't have to look for it.

When those white sheets are dead,
they melt as copper.
They're candles.
You can't put out this match.
Rain on it, but you'll fail.
And from my taste of cheating,
The sands don't like cheaters.

My eyes were never aware
of your, not my childish songs playing the sky.
Even as they hungered for youth's tenacity.
They were deaf, never hearing it,
never hearing Moses climb Mount Sinai,
or seeing God's voice.
Because they are not Moses, and they see
alive white sheets, still alive white sheets ruining you.

Are those sheets dead?
The sheets don't have to end in fire,
our candles may not die, but wave motionless.
You're flickering droplets of that azure flame?

Caroline Kessler

Snowpocalypse

Four in the morning.
Traffic signals hiss, a slow blink from green to yellow to red—
but the roads are empty of cars. Only the patter of footsteps
audible in the powdered streets.

Juniper on the roof of my mouth. We've been gone
all night, chasing each other. I sink down onto
what used to be a curb.

And then—we're running again, shouting our myths to the open sky.

Noon.
Mid-day shadows, and now a few cars troll
the sloshing roads. My belly is hollow with the cold.

In the distance, shouting—flying down Forbes Avenue, a man
on skis towed behind a car, his jacket tails flying behind him.

Ice on the back of my legs, sweat dampening my beck: Hunched-back
characters shovel their walkways. Everyone wants to make conversation.

Five in the afternoon.
I expose my camera to the cold, pressing it against my body to keep
it warm. I kick every icicle I see, humming a wordless song

The air is whitewashed clean, but the streets are turning to liquid.
The only way to get anywhere is to slide on your heels.

TorrieLee Chapman

Prophecy from a Hawk

Desolate sidewalks provide somewhere
for underage smokers to stand
holding cigarettes in a cliché manner,
like they saw on *Footloose*.

City dwellers carry umbrellas,
shielding themselves from heaven's tears
They are not flying away with them,
like when Mary Poppins did once.

No spoonful of sugar to help the medication go down.
Keep popping those pills, honey.

In attempts of escaping, little children
make faces out dirty windows.
Mothers grip the steering wheel,
in hot pursuit of another pregnancy test.

Men speaking broken English,
red cheeks and curled fists.
Frizzy beards like wooly worms' coat
are stroked and tugged.

Why won't somebody do a cartwheel on 5th Avenue?

Why aren't there butterflies swimming in the rivers?

Where is Mary Poppins?

I will flap my wings and beg for answers...

Alex Yuschik

Digital Symphony

It's two A.M. and this is the room where
everything's ringing: the screens, the fluorescing light,
that guy asleep on the beanbag chair right
outside this room with twenty eyes, all of them
dull and buzzing, stringing high frequencies
against the ceiling as morning wrings itself from night.

A man with mouse's hair hunches his shoulders,
a ghostlit frown clinging at his mouth
rings of ripples beneath his eyes
his fingers triple-tapping the desk.
A bottle of Mountain Dew that his hand
misses twice before grabbing shakes, pulses.
Silence has a bass line here:
the red fingers of the digital clock
scold the evening to submission
pound the room with a frenzied metronome
of clicks and tsk's. He hears the hammer of his blood
slur into harmonics, his fingers on the keys
scraping symphonies across exhausted muscles
begging him to stop—

for who is *he* to be down here at this hour?
The clock asks, the chairs sigh, cooing
hushed remarks about his type of ne'er-do-wells,
those who pit the late night rhythm
against their body's back beat.
The furniture gossips to itself, off duty,
the bloated exit sign snores above the door.

The man yawns; the desks perk up, the clock emits an ominous click.
His heart's a frenzy of mice scuttling through mazes
while dark eyes watch from all sides
two A.M. is his bass line and desperation the melody
swinging itself through his veins, as his digits kiss the keyboard
with all the fury of fluorescent lights.

Juliana Collins

Love Isn't a Kid's Toy

Imagine stumbling over a rock
you know is in your path and losing
your balance just to gain it back again,
like the way I fall for your
vacant words each time I know that I shouldn't.
And each time, I reward you
with a good morning text and a CD
full of contemporary hip-hop that you
don't hear on the radio.
It plays until you fall asleep every night.
... I'm thinking I should get you a kite instead.
I beg to differ since you claim
to love me.
Love, after all,
isn't a kid's toy.

You asked me to just listen
about your hardships and I gladly
wrapped my response up with care, sent it to
your phone where countless conversations reside,
mine next to hers and our
argument from the night before.
I finally broke the filter from my
head to my mouth and your breathing
on the other line was the only response I got.
I let it all flee to your end.

Your arms nuzzled around my neck count
as a replacement for an apology in your book.
And there you go, enjoying the company of
girl after girl after girl on downtown streets,
your hands on their shapes
the way my sweet chamomile and black cherry scent
lingers on Wood and Liberty where you stand.
I think for a second that I could possibly hate you,
brush past you without a trace of thought
and be perfectly okay.

I think that until this moment.
Until we walk onto my porch and you
hold the door while I get the mail,
waiting to be let back in once again.

Veronica Kawka

Our history for sale

In a small used bookstore,
you'll find an ancient book,
the dust settling in the niches
and fissures of each page
just like the barren desserts
that have yet to see the rain.
It's settled on that sixth shelf
snuggled against the back wall
just like you on Sunday mornings.

While you let the incense
from the front counter fill
your lungs 'til smoke exhausts
quietly from your nostrils like
Puff the Magic Dragon,
pick up the tatty bible
annotations. love songs and notes
words scratched into the palms
of pages smoldered in gold.

Let your fingers rub down
each surface, writing memories
of its leather form into the
journals archived alphabetically
in the fading memory you still hold.
Clamor to open it gently enough,
Passing fingers over the faded
ink, words blurring into cracks
of the pages parched skin.

Look at the soft yellow tag
"On Sale 2.99"
Buy it - for the discount.
Go home to rip the pages
from their bearings, only
to plaster them to your walls
trying to fill the large expanse
with your "sunshine girl"
catching the last wisps of dust.

Cassie Darcy

Conceited Man Foolish Girl

He walks like he owns
the world and everything in
it

Watch him walk
every step determined
to make a noise to be
heard; noticed
He enjoys girls eyes
lingering on him

He puts his arms around
girls acting like he brands
them with his name; like
he has marked his territory

Listen to his voice
as he tries to flirt
sounding like the
cliché men you watch
on t.v.

He watches himself as
he stands in front of the
window trying to see his
reflection
He smiles then nods
with accomplishment

In the halls he watches each
girl look over their shoulders
at him like his is a type of
famous adding more fuel to
his fire

He knows what he can
have and will have
He knows how to sweet talk
and how to make his lies tasty
He knows what he'll always
be good at and does it well

He lures her in, flirts, sweet
talks as his affection is noticed
You fall for his charm and the
show he puts on not realizing
that soon you will be the one
in the game he plays too well
the game he created and
always wins at

His prize

Your broken heart

Rachel Wilkin

On the Corner of 33rd and Findyour Way

People used to tell me I was born to sing,
had that rock and that rolling spirit
on the tip of my tongue.

Used to sit
in that smoken out room,
my table at the edge of the stage,
peeling apart empty aluminum cans
in quarter inch slices- puncturing

first with my pocket knife and pulling outwards
until I could find emotion. Sat and watched
every schmuck with a guitar and a wooden stool

until that same old emptiness brought me up
and into the light again.

That spotlight like a drug- etched
song lyrics into my forearm until
I got my fix.

The little hand hit 2 and I'd wander out
to find graffiti on brick walls of buildings
like aurora borealis painted over

an early morning sky- or just a bunch
of kids looking for meaning.

I found it once on a rainy night,
(meaning, that is),
looking up under a streetlight
in a pristine rimmed circle of brilliance
surrounded by a silent darkness

it found me. All I had to do was
stop looking.

Lilliana De Ciantis

Pooh and Piglet

It's Autumn and we eat in the forest
with Christopher Robin and Tigger
and Roo. Eeyore is gloomy.
You cheer him up. † You're good at that,
even if you are a Bear of Little Brains.

Winter comes and we play in the snow,
My hooves grow red from Winter's bite,
but your fur keeps us safe and warm.
Until you must spend weeks asleep

The snow melts and you come out to play
So we spend the day outside,
Keeping ourselves busy
Juicing strawberries between our teeth

And here come the summer lazies,
Big bellies and ripe fruits. †
We sip from melon shells,
and lick them clean with tender tongues.

Now the leaves are crunchy under our feet
We Trick or treat and fill baskets
with honey globs and chocolate kisses
Your stomach stretches wide,
You could fit me inside. †
And at dawn
We paint pictures of cats and bats
and rats in the sky. †

The shapes of the clouds
In front of the magenta shades.
A bear, a pig. † You and me.

Dom Davis

Etheridge's Cellmate

*"It is hard
To make a poem in prison
The air lends itself not
To the singer"*
—Etheridge Knight, "To Make a Poem in Prison"

Etheridge wasn't nothing but a junkie
when he showed up. Weak, from the weight
of his sentence. His biceps no stronger
after lifting a woman's purse from her shoulder.

He was quiet. Said it was the air
that kept him from talking.
Said it was too thick to disregard
& clogged his throat.

We thought he was just another poor, black man.
Etheridge thought that too. But the words of Malcolm X
& Langston's Hughes galvanized the nerves in his mind
& suddenly Etheridge didn't think the same no more

I heard him at night, mumbling
& writing. His voice was his pen
scratch. A lullaby in our concrete crib
that calmed the echo of faceless tears.

Soon, he sang as if the air had succumb
to his influence. He injected his words
into each inmates veins & they convulsed
without his song to soothe them.

With a liar's blunt teeth
& a lover's tender tongue
Etheridge made poems bloom
in a prison's poisoned soil.

Kyara Francis

My Name is Kyara Francis

Not kai-AR-ah
It doesn't attack the nose
And leave you lightheaded or nauseous
Like a strong permanent marker
Don't rip it across the roof
Of your mouth like Captain Crunch
Or stick it to the top like warm peanut butter
It doesn't crush your fingers
Biting and pinching each nerve
Like a door closed too soon
Nor does it echo through every ear
Like a bullet leaving its barrel
Kee-ara?
My name is not torture to the ears.

Not kee-AR-ah
It doesn't wail and shout
Like an infant in distress
Nor does the tongue reject it
Like long spoiled food
Don't drag it on the ground
Like a sack of dirty laundry
Or let it gather dust
Like an abandoned toy
It doesn't scratch on chalkboards
or blare irregular sounds
kee-AIR-ah.
My name is not annoying to the ears.

My name demands special treatment
Crafts its own phonetics
Unfamiliar to the untrained eye
Washes itself
And lets uniqueness drip off.

Marci Calabretta

Calabretta:

beautiful bambina

My grandmother maneuvers her bulk like a swan around the white-tile kitchen,
defly plucking basil and rosemary from the little pots lined up behind the sink.
Before the war, men brought her spices instead of flowers, for her blood-red sauces.

hot-tempered bambino

My grandfather would have inherited a vineyard in Calabria, but in the war
he drank American brandy while his grapes burned. He smiles proudly at me,
named for the roman war god, liquor fanning the arrhythmic beat of his heart.

hardworking bambino

My father went to college on a Pepsi scholarship wrung from lifting cases
of glass bottles that clinked and exploded from too much carbonation.
Every week he drove to mass sticky with glass and sugar, flies humming
kamikaze halos above his head in the stained-glass dawn of a swing shift.

traditional bambina

I got into college on a scholarship wrung from report cards and a part-time job.
My father lifts the brandy glass with fingers crippled from the factory line,
demands I learn to cook instead. My grandmother pulls me into flour-dusted arms:
Be strong, my beautiful hot-tempered bambina! Remember, you are a Calabretta!

David Foster

Clearly Now the Rain has Gone

I can see the two splashes of orange on my blue plate,
 My brother beside me, two baby carrots each on our plates.
 "Eat up, they're good for your eyes."
 I pop one in my mouth and snap it in two as I stare at the TV,
 Crunch, crunch,
 I imagine I can feel my eyes getting better.
 It tingles.
 Regardless of the meal, chicken nuggets, hot dog, noodles,
 We always have baby carrots.
 I can see us going out to eat,
 Out of the house, the city, the country even.
 Restaurants, admittedly, offer a change,
 Neither welcome nor unwelcome,
 Because we barely think about them anymore,
 Like our morning vitamins.
 I can see in the dark, the lights are turned off
 After dinner and we hide while someone else counts.
 When I seek in the dark, I find everyone fast, no matter how well hidden.
 I didn't peek.
 I can see the orange quadruplets on my plate. I'm expanding my horizons
 But I still like these. Force of habit.
 I can see things far away, and read the fine print of my book,
 Hidden in shadow under the kitchen table
 As I pop a toddler carrot in my mouth,
 It's too big to be a baby
 I can see the bottom line on the eye chart
 "Left, right, left, up, down, right, left,"
 Until he fiddles with some lenses and it blurs out of focus.
 I'm not that good a guesser.
 I can see the rims of the glasses I now wear, and the smudge on the glass.
 I can see fine without them, but I don't want to need glasses for real. These are
 preventative.
 I can see no orange on my plate today, and suddenly I wish I could.
 It seems more important.

Dmitry Berenson

Dextrose

The dishwasher hums, the kitchen light
 reflects in the black window, I unwrap
 a pair of Little Debbie Nutty Bars
 and -- it's summer camp, I'm sitting
 on that patch of grass with its orbiting
 bees, sliding my fingers between layers
 of peanut butter, prying up each
 wafer, licking the chocolate out
 of the crunchy grid until it's bone white,
 brown and tan caked under fingernails, rich.

Now the bars seem smaller in my hand,
 almost trivial. The back of the yellow box
 with the Annie-faced child says
 Dextrose, Niacin, Thiamin Mononitrate.
 In the cabinet there's 80% dark
 chocolate, Nutella, all-natural peanut
 butter, and all those summer noons
 I was filling myself with an empty fake.

Debbie, my name is Dmitry Berenson
 and I have loved you since I could tear
 open the crease on a plastic packet.
 My fingers know that pinch and pull
 better than the shape of a pen.
 I am writing to say that all is forgiven;
 that thick taste still sticks
 to the roof of my mouth, grass still prods
 at my folded legs, you are as real,
 as empty, as all natural things.

Noah Gup

When We Can't Remember Winter

The snow deceives us
hitches our hair
flips us topsover
in powerderpacks until
gravity is broken.
It throws us off mountains
only to hit the ground
with a light thump and cold cheeks
Instead of walking we'll clisp with ease
through the air so easy to forget
the weight of laglost days
adrift somewhere in the burr-hum
of wind and streetlights.

Much later, when we retire
to mumbly sheets
our blittered hands
remember how the fuzzed cloud
blurred our vision so we could only see
the woman's outline as she carried
a half-flinching figure
its cold cries distant already
blending in with the white.

Katie Dickson

How to Ride in the Bed of a Truck in January

The night is earmuff-
cold. Hear the icicles flying
on the wind—tiny daggers
swish-slashing through the sky
to carve heat from your ears.
You'll want to shield
them with your hands,
so go ahead—peel
them from the sides
of the bed, watch
the frost breathe into the gaps
your mittens have left
behind. Let go
and trust your life to
the sandpaper-slick
road ahead. Pretend
not to notice the odometer
pressing higher and higher, close
your eyes against the wind
and the fear. Open them
again if you can—watch the stars
whisper sparkle-secretly
faster, faster—

Kaitlin Manion

Life Lessons

Adapted from "Tete de Faune" by Arthur Rimbaud

He thinks in flower gardens, dreaming of the air,
he melts in words and flows freely through open space,
we were never worried about him trying to meet constellations,
only concerned that he would jump off various buildings until death.

He was graceful in every movement he made,
he loved the flowers, in all their shades of white,
dancing in the sun's beams and working braids into blades of grass,
I knew the stillness of his life like it was my own.
The tranquility when he talked, the airy feel of his laugh,
when he touched something, the world stopped for only a moment.

The lesson I learned was never too tough,
but it always ended horribly, as if to scare me away.
I never knew the meaning until one day,
he took me to the sky and we leapt, catching death forty years later.

Ines Pujos

The morning after the wake

solitude is measured

in a silk tea bag strung along.

A swollen lung of budded jasmine
fans in & out, absorbing
tinted sweet water—

All the terms of flowing linen graze
a thinly rimmed bowl
left cold & un-sipped.

she finds a strand of her dead

lover's hair behind the bed

as she sweeps the corners of the room—

Claire Mawtway

Photograph of a February Snowstorm

*my sister and two friends
standing at night on a snowy road*

watching the sore red glow of
receding tail lights,
feet sunken into the soft white
street. no one speaks
as snowflakes collect on the slow curves
of hunched shoulders and
wind-blurred shadows lie still. dying black sky
pushes down on the trees and
our heads; i want to
lie facedown in this gentle layer of
crumbling cold

Ellene G. Mobbs

A Night on Neville Street
after Lucille Clifton's "Photograph"

*Man walking his bike
through snow in the turning lane*

Darkened limbs
in the deep white, he insists on
meeting the road as a footprint,
distant to the wind-lacquered spokes
that softly roll up threads of snow
between their fingers.
His eyelashes wisp a prayer into hot light,
red eye, the vague press of the world,
full and silent—hold
the curve, hold this frozen tooth and tube
to cotton-box lids and bits of glass, for
this too this too this too shall—

Marigny Norman

OSEM Unicorn

She would be sweet,
with eyes like crystal,
clear into her mind.
Her Technicolor hair
would catch on the red
ribbon wrapped around her neck.
Carefully, she would tuck the
pink tips away and pick up my book,
encasing her life in love she thought
she felt.
Leaving her distraught and vulnerable
on the bathroom floor.
She is the loveliest writer I've ever read,
with the voice of an angel and
smile of a demi-goddess.

Oh, daughter of Zeus,
Let us raise our glasses!
Let us immerse ourselves in the slashes
of monster and let the water!
She will read my story
And I will listen to hers.

Madeleine Barnes

What looking does to the light

The story is long, even to me
it starts with twin cards in a tarot deck
it starts with a horoscope read too late,
one predictive scar in a closed palm,
a life-line split two ways.

I can't speak the words,
but I know you—once before we folded
into halves, napping in shared blood.

I don't call you anything
because they didn't name you,
but when the time comes
I will look up constantly
your apprentice of yet-to-become

attached to your first breath
I won't fail to meet you
and you will see me standing

with your curls in my hands,
their fortunate identical shimmering,
air-colored. Anywhere I'd know you
and think you must have lived
at least seven new colors

famous to me now, burning best
at night, little names without fortunes
and had we been exempt

from a world that keeps doing
what it does, I would want my loneliness
for everyone at midnight
to appear lung-shaped
in your fist.

Kiara Penn

Notes

After school I was waiting on
 The bus. An old lady dressed in all
 Black with a scarf around her head was standing with her
 husband who wore pale colors like
 Worn out brown and khaki.
 They were talking radically in a different
 Language
 they both turned
 To me,
 tapped their wrist and asked if “I had watch”,
 No I don’t have the time
 They stepped inside the pizza parlor to grab
 A soda and the son waited outside to flag them down when the “Thuty -one-DEE”
 Came.
 I laughed and got on the eighty-six-bee and went home.

When I got home my brother was crying about how he
 Had lost his girlfriends ultrasound pictures
 On his way off the bus. My brother is short,
 200 pounds
 a survivor of leukemia and 17 years old and all I could think of
 Was how there would be another child left in the cold.
 I shook my head and thought of how ready he wasn’t for this child.

In my dreams that night I saw my self in the middle of
 An empty yard and I was smiling and singing and dancing and
 Someone tapped me on the shoulder; asked me what I was doing.
 I woke up and I was confused; shocked at such a vivid dream
 I woke up and I was afraid.

Alexis Retcofsky

Snow Days

The days we made footprints in the fresh snow then followed them home.
 The days we carried the biggest clumps of snow we could find for a mile, only to throw
 them over the bridge.
 The days we waited until we had no feeling in our fingers to go inside.
 The days we wore two pairs of socks, pants, and gloves because one just wasn’t enough.
 The days we said we’d be home at six, but weren’t home until 6:30.
 The days we walked diagonally through the intersection and went sledding down the
 street and walked on the yellow lines like tightropes because we knew no cars dared to
 even start their engines.
 The days we went through 4 pairs of pants in one day.
 The days we made hot chocolate that was more chocolate and less hot.
 The days we waited until all our clothes were dry, only to go back outside.
 The days we wore snow pants every time we left the house because we never knew
 where the snow would be knee deep.
 The days we spent inside laughing at cheesy black and white movies.
 The days we tried to write letters to the mayor because we wanted plowed streets and
 we were tired of trucks ripping the side mirrors off our neighbor’s car.
 The days we tried to sled but sank.
 The days we spent hours making tracks for the sleds.
 The days we rolled down little hills, but then accidentally rolled down the stairs.
 The days we stayed up late and made plans because we knew there was no chance of
 having school the next day.
 The days we packed snowballs and tossed them over the bridge, aiming for the
 miraculously flowing river.
 The days we cheered on the postal workers.
 The days we turned the piles of plowed snow into igloos.
 The days we decided now was the time to go exploring.
 The days we ran out of things to do.
 The days we watched baby shows and pretended they were good, because everything
 else sucked.
 The days we beat trees with sticks to make it snow harder.
 The days we ate ice sickles like lollipops.
 The days we realized we actually wanted to go back to school.
 The days we forgot about school completely.

The days we expected to see Christmas decorations when we came inside.
The days we had crawl races across the icier snow, and screamed bloody murder when
we sank.
The days we were more organized than ever before.
The days we stayed inside and pretended we were models.
The days we were closer to our neighbors.
The days we were best friends with strangers.
The days we pretended we were swimming.
The days we couldn't even build a snowman or ice-skate because the snow was too soft.
The days we shouted "Snow Day."

Kristen Staab

1994, Another Story

My father hired men,
and with bare backs to the sky,
rebuilt our house, from the top down,
cleaving the roof clean off
to add another story.

Rain held its curtain to drought.
Dust churned in opaque waves,
mixed with sweat on skin.
The light, filtered by blue tarps
that draped a maze of walls,
clung to the exhaust of trucks,
to upturned earth, cracked and paling.

The house grew
with my mother's rounding stomach,
my youngest brother on the way.
In the heat, we watched
the red of our skin,
the sharp architecture of walls
cut into blue overhead,
a skeleton of scaffolding
rising into the expanse above.

The day the house stood tall,
it's posture matching my father's,
we clamored barefoot in the street,
rain falling in sheets around us.

Teireik Williams

Seeing Eye Love

Gravity keeps me from being with you.
Love keeps me trying when the world says no.
Hope keeps the burning fresh on my skin.
Why won't you let me be?
If I were God rose stems would
stretch our bodies together.
Thorns would prick any finger
who attempts to slight-of-hand
our dream,
for love is rough with them.
Innocent questions make way
for guilty answers.
Innocent stares make
guilty eyes confess.
Burning love turns vice,
becoming more like sinning
than death.
But less like death, for
if death carried my soul
I would not be as bent as
snow-covered branches
but relieved as the
earth relieves itself through
giant fiery cylinders.
We care not what the world
says, thought it has given us a
revelation.
We are pure in heart's sin.
Together we are until death do us part
and love until we bleed.

Andre Price

Let's Be Children

Back then
the cookies we made were perfect
and your hair had secrets.

But now
everyone tells us to grow up and get our shit together.
We told them it couldn't be done, and we were right.

The problem is, they don't have thighs like us.

They can't run like us.
They can't long jump past the 20' foot marker and drift straight into the stratosphere
like us.

We will run and jump until our names have been forgotten,
until we are lost to the wilderness.
There we'll climb trees and steal apples,

jump fences and rush fields.
We'll giggle and lie like children,
skirts in hand as we run away.

At night we'll sing like savages
and waltz in the woods.

Our bare feet will beat,
we'll step crunch and sweep.
We'll glide and turn through the night.

Adam Zell

A Risk

At the center of grit and glamour,
you know not what to expect.
The smell of new air and new metal
are captured, sworn into your body.

You must not judge something,
At the center of grit and glamour.
There is a difference between the truth,
and the facts:

 And the fact is,
surprises are held at the center of grit and glamour.
Here, all bets are off and what you see is what you get,
What you lose is daring, but what is won is
magnificent.

At the center of grit and glamour,
the heart pummels the chest and adrenaline rushes.
At the center of grit and glamour, walk in, guns blazing.
But when you leave, you must make a choice.

Then walk into the tall buildings and lose yourself in shadow;
beware of the loud people, gum stuck to benches, soot in the air;
Because at the center of grit and glamour, ride with the waves,
there is nothing you can do. You are there.

Gahl Pratt Pardes

Beggars by the Entrance to a Holy Place

There are stones and there are stones.
There are hearts and there are hearts.

and we sit here crosslegged as the day mimicking the passerbys jingling what little's in
our palms watching for the dawn and o and o and o they sure do come streaming at
first light and o and o and o how they sure do have a word or two to spare the rockface
but never but a single coin to spare our cups

There are stones and there are stones.
There are hearts and there are hearts.

and as you hear the thunder of our stomachs can you help but wonder what's more
worthy of the vigils hosted here why rock why foreheads to sharp granite why why why
and not a glance to our outstretched and tinny solicitations

There are stones and there are stones.
There are hearts and there are hearts.

and once we asked one who had wandered toothless towards the hardness of the
limestone to whisper his pleas his response came tired and rehearsed

*There are hearts that are stone
and there are stones that are hearts.*