

three poems by BRENT ARMENDINGER

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FOR MOUNT BALDY

The mountain's doubt is its double. In its green flashes of light and dark. The mountain is moving in its double. In its doubt of light the green is flashing. The flesh in its dark double. In its bauble of mile and molecule the mountain is moving. In its molecule. In its thank you. Giving the impression that the mountain is not moving. For your emptiness in follicles. For your "sharp turn in running, as of a hunted hare; also, of a river,"¹ for your exact copy in its minus in its double.

The computer goes to sleep in its handwriting. Giving the impression that the mountain is not a tree in its double. In its green flashes of handwriting the mountain is moving. In its antennae. The tree is moving in its handwriting. In its Baldy. In its name. For your business. In its thank you. Giving the impression that a leaf. Giving the impression that a hello. A leaf is sleeping in its hello. In its crumpled crumpled telegram.

The scissor is orbiting in its hand. The writing's double is its hand in its crumpled crumpled eclipse. A scissor is hungry in its eclipse inside its binary code. Giving the impression that the desert is not sleeping inside the river. The Colorado River is not sleeping inside its Colorado. Giving the impression inside its crumpled crumpled Colorado. The water's doubt is moving in its foliage in its mountain is a question. A hunted hare is sleeping inside the double. Trying to wake up inside the yes.

¹Oxford English Dictionary, "double," definition #6.

WHAT IS A PRAYER

if not the opening that the clock's reflection enters,
the blinking bus gone
into how the night continues to saw the sky
in permutations, the moon

doesn't miss you
doesn't press your head against a window
or fall asleep on the train
doesn't conceive of your body as a hole
on the block where you used to live

the blinking sky has nothing
to regret, nothing to begin when the street
dissolves into
our shiny stack of errors

Oh little light box,

you used to live to see the moon

a bird
disregarding the end of the air
a wing flapping inside the witness

How is it possible
to be lain inside a fact

- *PRISM REVIEW* -

to be lain inside a shadow
pushing us down the sidewalk
like that woman
being led by her own grocery cart

to be looked at from the eye
of one who's larger

the least perfect one
the human one

I gave away my wing
I held it

CATCH AND RELEASE

We walked the river looking for that afternoon, for your father
like an echo – a son unraveled from the anchor he meant to be
rudder. Your mother never told you. How the quiet happened,
and I thought to bury myself in that snow I want to be for you,

but I know the whiteness is interrupted, the quiet
becoming tooth decay, the roof of our mouths.

I could not emerge as any other weather but I pluck it,
the shadow that slid away from you, now, years later,

where I sleep like a real boy. Somewhere north of yesterday.
If a name runs away from its offspring then what can I do?

Carved in rock or syllable is not a hand to part your hair.
Such a long time to show his face to you, that wind. You say

my words go over you. I was born so quiet and saying so.
Now we both are hard of hearing which is really hard of digging

the noise back out from hollows. I have been returning –
the song of thick clouds when all are washing over you.

This morning, the howl of the train and casting a line
is how I hear you. Even here, up there,

you pour each fish back into water, like an echo.
You have long since asked for him, you told me,

as if before became you, as if I finally know you,
the mountain, together with your hands.