

three poems by MELISSA BURTON

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CLIENT SERVICES

Please note that by logging into
this system, an aneurysm will pop.

Eyelids will widen, toes curl when the
blades of light caress the exterior.

Assume all levels of risk when the
the blast comes and a lake

arrives. Fall into the crack, enjoy
the blood smoothie churning in

the skull. Hold that last thought,
explore its final breath.

Colors meld into walls of foaming bubbles,
voices become pinpricks of crocus.

Please use this moment at
your own discretion, bathe in what

you told of tomorrow. Kiss the fur
made of blueberries and affirmations.

Shut the light so the echoes do not carry,
and your body can never speak.

We sincerely hope it will be
like the coelacanth outdoing extinction.

ABUSED PERENNIAL GARDEN

“I do love you, so stop it!” he shouted, shoving her into the bathroom,
through the tiled floor and watching her land hard on the surface of the moon.
All feathers, insignias that danced quietly down the rainbow annular staircase
fusing a popping cinnamon flame, breaking, reforming
by her newfound power, everyone discovering what remains after vulnerability.
The never fiancée staring out at the wilting coneflowers
at night with the counterfeit beloved who had not yet harmed her.
Ghosts reflecting within the purple petals.

TILTING

We think that seasons are caused by an axial tilt.
One accidental gulp of sea water contains millions of viruses.

I hate the echo of a slamming car door that reaches my window,
the power reaching its precipice.

The summer illuminates the ocean and a brick falls gracefully
to the sea floor.

The brick will be painted with time, that is sure. It's no better
than the artificially dyed fish which will remain fluid under its skin.

In winter you may find the sea weeds mourning.
An older sailor harvests them by the thousands

creating paste for his wife's skin.
There was the night my cousin died.

A gun wound in his neck
and he had never been to Disneyland.

Even while he lay at the bottom
of the ocean, he wasn't missed.

You call him ugly because he never smiles.
They kicked his body until his belly spurt like a cannon.

Not many people know the Baiji is extinct. The Yangtze River
has lost its million year companion.