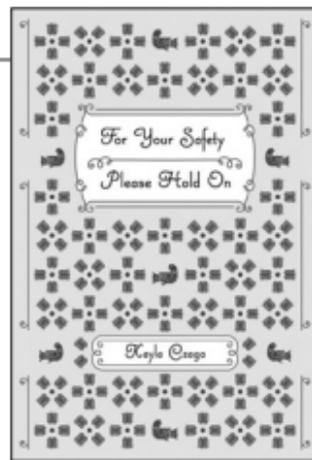


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*For Your Safety Please Hold On* by Kayla Czaga,  
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from **ANOTHER  
POEM ABOUT  
MY FATHER**

My father is more like a poem than most poems are. He once tucked a living loon into his coat and brought it home to amuse my mother who loves birds, especially surprised-sounding birds, especially owls. My nostalgia receptors zigzag wildly through me when I think of my father pushing his metal detector across all the parks, schoolyards and riverbanks of this great nation, waving it back and forth—*like some sort of yayhoo*, my mother would say—until it beeps solemnly above a nickel. With a butter knife he cuts such slender metaphors from the earth.

— Kayla Czaga

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from *ATONEMENT*

What will we remember of our time here  
where shadows blossomed into grief,  
where we couldn't know just by looking  
which stars were alive  
and which died centuries ago.

We'll speak of the way we held  
forgiveness in our pockets,  
reached in and felt it there,  
forgiveness ready any moment  
to be given and given away.

We'll say, how hard we tried.  
How hard we tried to love.

— Pamela Porter

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**BLACKBERRY/  
STAIN**

Sun-heavy blackberries tempt us to make a meal  
of black juice and this sweet swaying perfume.  
I could follow the thin fjords into brambles  
from one berry to the next. But when to stop?

Take this one, it's ready to burst.  
I'll dress your lips with it, like so, be  
the wasp searching at the corner  
of your mouth for summer.

— Beth Kope

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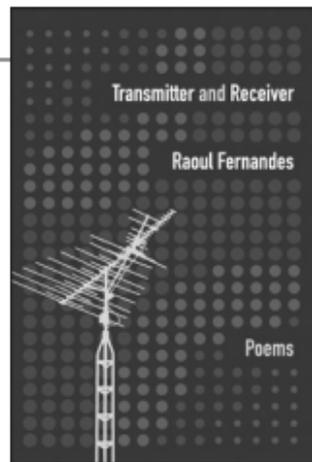
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*Transmitter and Receiver* by Raoul Fernandes,  
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## BLACKOUT

The storm gathers, stirs a tree, breaks  
a branch, takes out a cable, cuts the power,  
quiets our fridge, watches us through the window  
where we sit to eat ice cream in the dark.  
You strike a match, cup the flame,  
touch it to the candle's wick.  
The city is already motioning to repair  
but we can't hear it for the trees. We hope  
it will take its time. Who will sit  
at the piano tonight? The child  
given relief from her homework. A relief  
for the moment. The storm  
raining its applause on the roof.

— Raoul Fernandes

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from **DECLARATION  
OF INTENT**

water connects us to salmon & cedar, whales & workers  
its currents bearing the plastic from our fridges & closets  
a gyre of karma recirculates, burgeoning body burden  
i hereby invoke fluid wisdom to guide us through the toxic muck  
i will apprentice myself to creeks & tributaries, groundwater &  
glaciers  
listen for the salty pulse within, the blood that recognizes marine  
ancestry  
in its chemical composition & intuitive pull  
i will learn through immersion, flotation & transformation  
as water expands & contracts, i will fit myself to its ever-changing  
dimensions  
molecular & spectacular, water will return what we give it, be that  
arrogance & poison, reverence & light, ambivalence & respect  
let our societies be revived as watersheds

— Rita Wong

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## HASTINGS- SUNRISE

When public space grows scarce,  
tennis courts get taken over  
for badminton, bike polo, skateboarding.  
Training ground for unicyclers, kick-boxers,  
pyrotechnicians and my favourite:  
seniors in matching white

sun hats. At dawn, they coax stiff bodies  
through sequence, *part the wild horse's mane,*  
*wave hands like clouds,* while I wait  
for the kettle to boil. Small comfort  
to know someone's awake before me,  
*needle at sea bottom.*

— Bren Simmers

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from NIGHT  
NEAR  
TRIKALA

I arrived at the small hotel where I rented a room  
and found it locked for the night, and my door key lost,  
and I slept on a bench in the central square  
feeling as if I had drunk of the earth,  
face to the voluptuous, cool, grape-dark sky  
and the new stars with their millions-of-years-old light  
that spread over me like glittering keys, like new senses,  
and imagining I might never wake again,  
or ever open the same eyes again, for they would go  
making their own way in amongst people, in amongst gods.

— Russell Thornton

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## SHIFTING THROUGH SMALL TALK

I never understood sitting in silence next to a stranger. Even as a kid on the bus I wanted to strike up conversation as easily as a match lights a cigarette. Inhaled imaginary quips. Exhaled and choked, tongue-tied on the way to Guildford Mall or Surrey Place. I had to wait through twenty years in a classroom enforcing the friendly rules of conversation to finally find myself comfortable inside chit-chat on my bike to work. To turn to someone at a red light and talk about her bell, or his panniers or our sky, our bike paths, our gear in the rain.

— Kevin Spenst

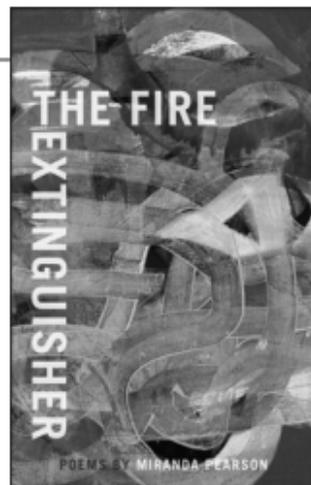
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## TUDELEY CHURCH

Chagall's stained glass windows  
holy beyond belief. My father's  
tweed shoulder, his handkerchief,  
and my mother waiting outside.

Their twin loves illuminated,  
pouring through me that day  
in the quiet way they let it show,  
the high gem-blue windows, the sun  
lit indigo.

— Miranda Pearson

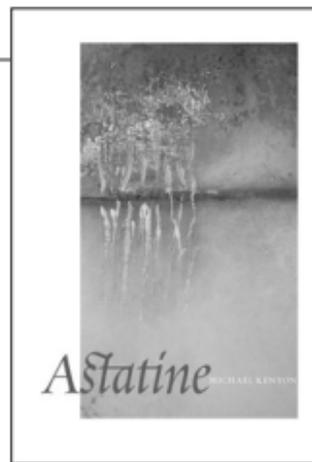
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WRITTEN ON  
A WINTER  
MORNING

A dog barks three times. Snow is still falling.  
Wonder if the streets are filled between me  
and my old master. My wife and child are  
gone to borrow winter boots, leaving me  
alone with the poems of T'ao Ch'ien  
who stalked his heart away from politics  
to a broken cottage under flying  
clouds. The roofs are white this morning. I wish  
I could fly. A fire burns in the south wall  
near my writing desk. I wonder if I  
am that dark figure braving soft white streets  
to visit my old master. The snow deep  
as a well up to the hill where he lives.  
When spring comes we'll read poems together.

— Michael Kenyon

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