

*Davi Loren*

## **The Cost of Repair**

The main line finally burst.  
Water spewed upward into the shingles,  
cascaded down into the wallboard,  
turned our solid home into paste.

Jake strangled the valve with a wrench  
and the hissing stopped. His eyes  
cloud with exhaustion. It always  
seems to come down  
to money.

I watch the last lingering drop  
fall from the faucet,  
and then slosh to the wading table  
to help dissect the budget.

To the dull stuccato of pencil scratch  
on a yellow micro-lined pad,  
we redefine our most cherished needs  
as luxuries. We slice away  
the less than vital organs  
with parched, steady hands.

My books, his music,  
my beloved new vocation  
float silently past our ankles.  
What good is poetry, he asks,  
to a person without water?

The pencil falls and he is silent.  
We have measured the cost.  
I slice open the last persimmon  
from our garden tree  
and hold it gleaming to the light.  
Orange on glowing orange,  
like the spokes of a translucent wheel  
its sap bursts starlike from the center  
radiating in a perfect circle.

## **To an Old Friend**

I almost did it.  
When your arm  
stretched and arched softly  
over the back of the couch,  
fingers brushing the vacancy,  
I almost set down my mug  
and crossed the room  
to curl up in you  
and finish once again  
the circle you began

I almost forgot  
in that split of an instant  
the wedge of years between us,  
the husband and children, potted plants, pets,  
which sprouted with shameless ease  
in your wake.

What glorious disorder  
your life would have suffered  
with toys underfoot  
and a regular job

I tug at my teabag and sit far apart  
with a cat on my shoulder  
a child in my lap,  
and gaze at the shadow  
so still in your arm.