



Summer strips down, starting with shoulders,  
on every pillow a spindrift of scurf.

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To shed is to shudder the cold from one's surface,  
become branchless unbroken — a lodgepole pine.

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These trees need little light, crowd in,  
kill off their low branches to push the canopy higher.  
What seeds may fall among the needles and elk hair  
are too shaded to catch, too dry to bud.

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Rangers call lightning “natural ignition,”  
fire is “hunger,” dead things are “fuel.”

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Above, the lodgepole licks shut its cones.

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What's on the tongue when the light blows out?  
Insect-burn and the sharp taste of heat,  
emberfuzz of mouth gone electric,  
you hollow — frozen in soprano “oh,”  
open out from the fire's fist.

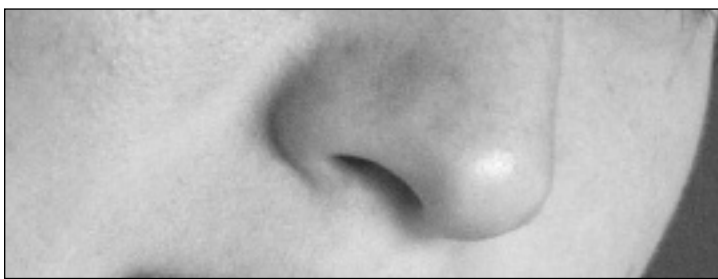
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After a blaze, the forest map changes,  
gives way to uncanny parallel —  
row on row of bare trunks above scorch-dark earth:  
pointed pillars, nuclear nudes,  
between them, new green spikes, aligned.

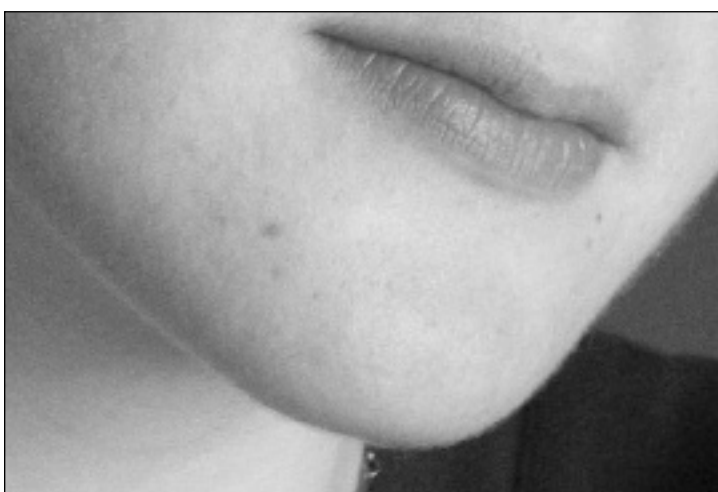
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Stripped to the raw you are compasswild,  
shadow-print, negative space.  
You take the flame in your hands and run.

## Symmetry



## Borsuk



Amaranth Borsuk recently received her B.A. in English with an emphasis in Creative Writing from UCLA, where she also minored in Women's Studies. Her honors thesis, *Winterward*, a thirty-page, hand-bound chapbook, received the department's Thompson Prize for best creative thesis. Last year, she placed first in the statewide Ina Coolbrith poetry contest and received the English department's Shirle Dorothy Robbins Award in Poetry. Her poem *Tomato Variations* appeared in the winter, 2004 issue of *The Antioch Review* and she has a poem forthcoming in *Smartish Pace*. This fall, she will begin her Ph.D. studies in Literature and Creative Writing at the University of Southern California. Her interests include found art, altered books, moustaches, and ephemera.