

Wilderness House Literary Review 7/2

Sara Fitzpatrick Comito
Pieces of the poet

This is the poem you leave behind
that you die in the middle of. Would
you want to be a tea drinker, circles of
honeyed milk a slovenly notion among
the measured stacks? Expurgate by small

cauldron fire the incriminating diaries.
Plant a demure brandy flask and catalog
your correspondence with the semi-
famous author. This is your museum
of yourself. What to write? Choose one
to be your favorite pen. There's so much

your friends don't know about you. This
is the clouded window through which he
gazed at length. And this, the photo of his
long-dead wife. Cancer, young. We only
met him later. Pretty girl, though. So sad.
He had the most amazing perspective given

everything! And now, he, cut down in
his prime. He would joke about being
camouflaged on the couch. All that tweed.
Odd, the poet was a walking cliché. And
none of you ever read a word? Glances
all around. He had struck up a friendship

with that doctor, was working on "something
medical." What's left on his desk, then?
Just impressions on the notepad, revealed by
pencil rubbing: succinylcholine chloride.
Strange title. And shame he didn't get too
far with it.

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Permission to expand

if you can work on your posture you can
work on anything - stop squishing your organs

when pressure in your head oblongs your
eyes it's myopia, sounds Greek

at least it's something clinical
consider it the reverse of a telescope

a machine that makes
everything inside look big

my friend's mom hated to think about
those pulsing things working on her behalf

she died young of a heart attack but was
glad to know I had moved on from that man

even at my immediate peril. Some mechanisms
are faithful when we don't think about them

stretch your spine, make space, but you can't be
afraid of invasion. Gird nothing. Good luck.

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An impossible blue day around Easter

Sanibel Island, Florida

Slick of medhaden oil, the jack have been ripping it up for ten minutes and in rolls the heavy – no one's scared, just pressed past any possible exhalation. Tick another one off the allotment.

How we seek to shorten our days.

The skiff's come out too far from the lighthouse, lured by diving birds and the roiling strikes. Outrageous visibility despite the churning, our small boat false asylum, we feel like a balancing plate almost

out of spin. Through strata of nerves and fin, mackerel silver knives of lightning in dark clouds of herring, come seven feet of bull shark, all sable confidence and he's just checking out the goods. The weather

could change anytime. And the shellers on the beach just fit inside the eyes of my rod. Another shredded leader, time to switch out for the stainless. Scales catch the sunlight, falling jewels all the way down.

Blood in the boat, you said. It's a good day.

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Months by the insects

we must have something sweet and rotting in a corner somewhere

remember, every year in February we have the sweet ants looking for water
March is fruit flies

What is April?
I don't want to talk
about it

but we've gotten away with storing the grains for too long –
summer belongs to weevils

And what about the roaches?
They don't have a season.
In Florida, anyway, they have a different name.

Dust around the traps. Mites dance
in a slant of pollen.