

JANA DANNIELS

back to source

over the night hours
the snow accumulates
 star by star
until the evergreen bows
with the weight
whoosh, buckles under
and the snow sweeps
down as one
silent planet falling through space

a maple bud closed tight
takes days to juice up with new heat
 to swell against its pod
aches to open until in a final too-much
I can't stand it bursts
a lime-green bouquet, tiny flowers stiff
and sticky
spring from their casing like
elastics still attached
 attempt to fling
themselves to earth

is it timing or pressure that births
the egg,
 a chrysalis rips
(always a small, dark world
 opens into a larger with
more light at the point of entry,
no return)

I must find my way back
through the brittle pieces of shell
exploding rock,
torn seams
to before the world split open

before the first crack

Jana Daniels is a graduate student from the Kootenay School of the Arts. She lives and works in Nelson B.C.

KATERINA FRETWELL

Madness

At 4 a.m. I stare down the medicine cabinet
and swallow it whole,
on my knees imploring, but still
sleepless – at 10 a.m. turned thirty,
stuck on the clay side of P.E.I.
with the liquor stores closed
for Canada Day,
my mind entirely.

“I Vote For The Waffle party”
affixed to a man’s lapel
on the ferry over.
Sleep wash dress eat
too far out to fathom,
I loll on the bilious - coloured couch
while he who is my husband
shows our toddler all the nice cows chewing their cuds.

Just outside our rented trailer,
time collapsed, its alien pace
foreign as the birthday bubbly
I kept to myself. But the champagne traitor
did not quell my loopy logic
or fix me into sweet zzzzs.
That weekend couch, what bliss
my thoughts ran too fast
for guilt shame blame to stick.

Back home, what hell – a hippie-doc’s
Largactil* swept me onto
a five-year mindless doom-cloud.
No speech, no words.

*Largactil, a major tranquilizer, has been taken off the market.

Katerina Fretwell is a poet and artist whose work has reached international audiences. She is the author of three poetry collections. The most recent, Remyth, was published by Cranberry Tree Press in 1997.