

uncoupled

Peter Engen

it wasn't supposed to end like this
but I buried us both in the water
after the fever broke
I pushed our feet into the river
and bent at the waist while
cradling the lifeless parts of us into the current
from the shore
she and I sank to the bottom like pig iron
and slid over the drowned logs and catfish bones
all the way to the delta mud
I imagine a piece of me there still
drifting even further out
I sat a while in the warm sand
at the edge of its wet sinewed tail
and didn't say goodbye
I just sat and felt it go
because my chrysalis heart
had slowly unraveled itself
into an august dragonfly
and I could feel the shimmer of its wings
beating in both my hands
begging me to rise

zero

Peter Engen

zero degrees and the stubborn arm on
the thermometer splits another morning in two
wedged between the horizon of a bruised dawn
and a bleeding sunrise

the skyline suffers its skin to the wind
every moment a mountain now with
summits as flat as fallow wheat-
fields in the crow-eyed obsidian stare

I reach into winter with an
arcane silence from the clove scented
cave of my mouth where white clouds of breath rise
through a henge of stone teeth out of
the hollow space that holds
a rumored human heart