



Emma Croll-Baehre

Illness

Winter has set in I hear it's breaths a coating of
 melting snow covers an empty jacket next to the road damp
 forest fabric below two small white crosses
 stand like totem poles in the ground where he
 died Happy Birthday balloons tied to
 their peaks dilapidated chocking against the tall grey grasses
 consuming I hide my illness stealthily beneath
 my tightly packed blue-jay down feathers walking by the
 churning sea sloshing with ice
 it consumes every space in my mind
 infiltrating my body far below this pallid exterior
 stability tranquility lies to the ones who think they know
 secret gargoyles of rage
 isolation sets deep roots beneath my skin I
 walk until I reach the darkness past the
 fluorescence of a gas station clinging to the black
 night like a ghost a man
 crouches feral and anticipatory
 garbled words lunging at my figure illuminated beneath the
 esso alcove

my greyhound legs urge me to sprint back to populous

thoughts ravelling forward your
 hardened face eyes a mixture of
 fragility and cigarettes I consider my options sinking
 into desolation spurred on red wine heightened
 incoherency disastrous senses mocking my secrecy
 defects exposed near the glowing gas pumps

silver daybreak smears the horizon
 magnificent gulls croak out an early adulthood circling
 above hideous sounds mocking my naivety disease
 beats the tips of my ears red it is cold this
 foetal November





my narrow rabbits feet are leaded with cynicism apathy
energy
drips from my fingertips onto the crumbling concrete as I trek
a world where innocence is no longer idolized back
through the muddy hinterland dulling bulbs of the gas station
melting into the bleak light of morning electricity
rippling across the stretch of teal water
succumbing to distance.

