



Two Poems

By Kathleen Hellen

You, Thief

The little deaths you leave: The hollow of a torso. The clever spill
that can't redeem a night's annihilation.
That won't erase the viscous discontent of this lament.

In the absence

of sheets: Who's there?
asking: *Who? Who will save you?*

This super-imposition dares a shape. A brotheled fear
that leaves me staring at the roe of you're not here

The house belonged to echoes

How would they divide
the things she'd promised? The furniture, the bright
Fiesta dinnerware she used on holidays they visited.
He can't stay here, the grownups said, agreeing, for once,
on something. I called him *Grampa* but

I was corrected. *George*: A dirty word. A shot glass in the shed
A blunt Perodi. He moved into the house to tend a garden patch,
kept the flowered cactus on the ledge, a sweat-stained hat

kept a calendar with ample, naked women.
They never married but he washed her hair,
washed the sheets and ironed them,
emptied out the piss-pot.

What about her SSI? Insurance?
I'll need a truck, Aunt Emma said.

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Kathleen Hellen is a poet and the author of *Umberto's Night* (Washington Writers Publishing House, 2012) and *The Girl Who Loved Mothra* (Finishing Line Press, 2010). Her poems are widely published and have appeared in *American Letters & Commentary*; *Barrow Street*; *Cimarron Review*; *Nimrod*; *Poetry Northwest*; *Prairie Schooner*; *Stand*; and

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