



## 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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*Sycamore Review* among others; and were featured on WYPR's *The Signal*.

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