

[Home](#)

[Spring 2009](#)

[Autumn 2008](#)

[Summer 2008](#)

[Spring/Summer 2008](#)

[Winter/Spring 2008](#)

[Autumn 2007](#)

[Summer 2007](#)

[Spring 2007](#)

[Winter 2007](#)

[Autumn 2006](#)

[Summer 2006](#)

[Spring 2006](#)

[Winter 2006](#)

[Fall 2005](#)

[Summer 2005](#)

[Editor's Note](#)

[Guidelines](#)

[SNR's Writers](#)

[Contact](#)



### **leave me to my bitterness**

he screams and slams the door.  
the luxury of self-serving loftiness  
washes away each night,  
as he lies awake  
hoping she will live  
long enough to regret leaving him,  
as he has lived long enough  
to regret loving her.  
still, no one is willing to concede  
these little moments of bitterness,  
to let him wallow,  
to let him soak,  
to simmer, to stew  
in the heavy, warm brew  
of angry thoughts  
washing through his head,  
wandering, waving—  
like desperate kisses  
on his face, his eyes,  
his nose, his lips.  
desperate to breathe,  
desperate to sleep,  
desperate to scream  
at her, alone,  
by himself.

### **Expectations**

*A Meditation on the Tinklepaugh Study of 1928*

When we used to sit around the table  
and learn and read and write behind  
the ominous metal door,  
when the dispatches came  
from the home office in Spangle, Washington,  
those were our days of electrocution.

When workshops were taught  
in that abandoned bank vault,  
we were fascinated by the healing power  
of the electricity coursing through our brains.  
Those were our days of bold decisions  
with the fried corpses of ideas laid out  
like fresh shirts and ties before a hot date.

We were our own monkeys of expectation.  
Our banana treat prize waiting  
for our hands to do the taking!  
Why, then, doesn't anyone understand  
our anger, our frustration at the prospect  
of lettuce lurking beneath the bowl of promise?

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### **On Viewing a Sculpture by Rodin**

Is her indifference  
carelessly planned,  
or is she so confident  
that his kiss will always be there,  
upon her stomach,  
that she feels no fear?

If she is heavy  
with her indifference,  
more concerned with her foot  
than the press of his lips,  
then love must be  
hard. It must be heavy,  
Love must dig into the knees  
like the rough marble  
they were pulled from,  
that pushes against his legs.  
His body twists,  
the shoulders bend,  
stretching the powerful,  
the long muscles under  
love's weight.

But isn't this  
what he always wanted:  
her laid out before him,  
there to worship,  
there to praise,  
there to ignore him  
night after day?  
His hands forever  
behind his back,  
her hands never  
in his hair in  
casual approval,  
but playing with her toes.

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**Daryl Muranaka** attended the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, earning a Bachelor's degree in Asian History. While there, he was a student of Naomi Shihab Nye, who was a visiting writer. In 1996, Mr. Muranaka graduated from Eastern Washington University in Cheney/Spokane with a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing. From 1997 until 2000, he worked in Fukui Prefecture, Japan, as a member of Japan Exchange of Teaching Program (JET). He used this opportunity to travel throughout Japan and other parts of Asia. While living in Japan, he earned a black belt in Aikido. Since his return to the United States, this period has proved to be a constant resource for his writing. His publication credits include *Hawai'i Review*, *Bamboo Ridge*, *Poetry East*, *Clackamas Literary Review*, *Trestle Creek Review*, and *Asphodel*, the *Literary Journal of Rowan University*.