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Two Poems

by John Harper

Elegantly Fading

All that's missing is the feeling
in the voice; otherwise, whether I'm having paranoid
hallucinations or not remains a pall in the joke;
drifting down, then, to a taste of vanilla,
wherein I get some sanity,
I'm elegantly fading,
one eye opening at a time—
and after awhile there are many—

I should meditate into the pajama folds
of this morning's sky; it hangs low in the valley;
a foggy sun sits in the neighbor's porch swing;
I swear into god's giant breath
for me to be leaping, as completely as possible,
full of reversing ideas never idle—
my days depend on the covenant
of the overcoat for April's rain—

Why of I

The *why* of I on earth
makes sense
to keep running for—

but it's also not a big deal
to be mumbling
modest; after all,

I am human
and so I heal
in feeling much

more than I—
it's the wildest thing—
to forgive and move

on, to nowhere; I love it;
I love this;
it's a triumph

that daylight's
cracking through;
it does; it did—

Guidelines

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I won't see
if there's
nothing to see other

than I—I die
into life and this
is always—

Some of **John Harper's** poems have been published by literary journals like *Diagram*, *Five Quarterly*, *Mid-American Poetry Review*, and *Cutbank*. His chapbook, *Peek-a-Boo Terrain*, was published by Little Partner Press in 2005. He graduated from the University of Iowa's MFA program in 2001. He doesn't know what life's for, but is enjoying it all the same.

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