

# Daguerreotype

*John McCarthy*

swirling toward me as I dine outside

the clamor and chorus of silverware

makes my teeth hunger and hurt

from cotillion snapshots in autumn

you look like porcelain in ornate taffeta

my hands pluck a seed from each sequin

loss grows exhausted from the loam

across a fake *Buttes Chaumont*

this lifetime separated by lifetimes

at an American café spilling water alone

your memory is a thin cloud of gnats

folded and pressed into white-lace napkins

I am reminded of the future we predicted

skeletons of bobby pins in your bouffant

milk stitches weave your body close

unraveling you like years

like skin around an old ankle bone

a styrofoam trellis a blue camera spark

guilt flattening laughter into a line

over your face so young always alive