

Figures in Disquieting Landscapes

by Gary Hardaway

Virtual Strip Mine

We have an illusion
of conversation here-
just enough to get us posting
wracked and wretched assertions
that can be mined
for tenuous filaments
flung across the wounds
the century becomes.

Blue to Black

During daylight, blue and cloud
and the searing disc of sun
seem intimate and the world
appears a touchable realm.
After dark, the pinprick stars
and pale, oculus moon
reaffirm the black, unreachable
mysteries of an infinite sky.

Squid

Tentacles hold fast to the small
thrashing thing they believe is true

which, devoured, once crushed
completely still, turns into shit,

the useless, toxic waste
of another attempt to understand.

Claim

I found my voice among discarded
bottle caps and beer cans.
No one else much wanted it.

A Little Matter, Reclaimed

Unless you die in space,
beyond your planet's ancient tug,

you will be earth again-
whether burned to ash and jarred

or lost in the far country, unseen,
or drained, pumped up again,

and painted, for the neatly drafted
village of the dead.

