

Couch Potato Blues

by John Olson

Whenever I get the urge
To write a poem I try to talk
Myself out of it. Especially
If it involves getting off of the couch
What kind of poem would insist on being
Written down anyway, is that the kind
Of poem that you want to write
Or is that the kind of poem that the poem
Wants you to write? A little effort
Turns it into a forklift. A little more
Effort opens a door
In the brain and everything flint
Becomes an intonation, a delicious
Tornado of glands and xylophones
Buttering a slow tattoo
O blacksmith toast. Autumn is neutral
But crawls by anyway crackling with Halloween
And its lurid meanings of death
Sparkling faster than a green shampoo
In a house of skeletons. It is ultimately
Through words that a zeitgeist gets
Into a personality and blends
With Florida. Everything else seems
Magnetized by books. The kind of opinions
Exchanged in a shopping mall
Echo like salt in a jukebox
Made of scabs. This is where the poem gets
Ugly. Lift the lever at the end of the line
And a fireball appears
To be soaked in words. Above all don't
Write anything that you don't feel
Is genuinely searching for something real

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And tactile, like Mick Jagger in a bathroom
Looking for a towel. Achieve ribbed cotton
And you achieve the world. You may now
Return to the couch, and refute the laws of physics
However you please

