

# Burning

by Mark Waldrop

When she told me to write it  
I did; I scratched out what I wanted to say  
in quick print letters. Not all of it.  
I could never get it all out in an hour but the  
general idea was definitely there.

We had to finish it in the rain because  
we couldn't light the fire  
inside.

I was building moisture myself, my glasses  
a shaken tonic of sprinkles and damp glass  
teardrops and all of it seemed to hit the page.  
It wrinkled and wadded,  
and wouldn't tear clean and I'm surprised  
I could get it to burn but I did.

She was on the sidewalk, smoking a cigarette with my sandals.  
Somehow I thought I didn't want to get the suede in the dirt  
and I could feel grainy mud crawling spatters  
up my legs and I warmed my hands over the pages, feeling  
homeless, finally.

