

An Object for the Sun God

by Robert Salley

and she ran away
with a violence
stabbing at her knees and feet

dissolving into the wetness
of winter air

her face, now
only a 3x4 snapshot
lost in a sea
of other imprisoned moments
scattered
on a living room floor

I can move the thin
flat pile; searching
but all that is left is
a memory of soft blue eyes
and medicine that won't heal.

this one was abandoned
a splinter
left under the skin
pushed out by protective flesh
over time...
over pain and infection

it peels apart
and shows off the insides
a place where secrets
are stored; protected

away from idol hands
in the back pocket
of frayed blue jeans
and a forgetful mind

in here,
past drawn curtains,
and stain-glass windows,
she can see me
stranded
on my island of the past
holding each picture
up to the light
like an offering
objects for the Sun God

"not this one"
"nor this one"

it's the one
with her arm
around my neck
our two wild smiles
and the statue
of Nike
in the background
headless and
wings spread out

"Where?"

gone
reversed back to blackness
and I remain the madman
hoarder

of images; of a face
ten years younger
than it was
yesterday.

