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Possum

First, the hanging feeder fell
when the squirrel swung from its grate.

We watched the cardinals light on the mess,
peck seeds from the snow.

Then the sound of a woodpecker
far in the field. We could say

of these: signs of spring, but here snow stays
late into April. Nothing blossoms,

nothing will shake its lilac jackets to the ground
like snow. There is only real snow.

We place bets: when the ice will melt off the lake, when
the possum will come to the sliding glass door

in the night, pressing its nose, showing its teeth
in a monstrous yawn. But we take it

for what it is – not omen.

Anamnesis

Not forgetting the swing-set's
old ropes, the park blinking fireflies.

Not forgetting the dance. Applause
through the band shell. And later,

fireworks from the pier, small bombs
in our chests. Not forgetting

how we lay on rough woolen blankets,
girls up late for the show, junior high girls

with ankles and wrists overlapping.
Not forgetting even our not knowing,

its breakable cup in our hands.
So much I make up – *the paper-dry wind* –

or, past that – *our pink throats opened up*.
Not real, but how like the invisible spires

of sailboats, each floating a single green light
below so much smoke in the sky,

their constellations drawn to us.

Laura Donnelly

Laura Donnelly's poetry has been published or is forthcoming in such journals as *Cimarron Review*, *Poetry East*, *Portland Review* and *DIAGRAM*. She is a PhD candidate in poetry at Western Michigan University, and the 2009-2010 editor of *Third Coast*.