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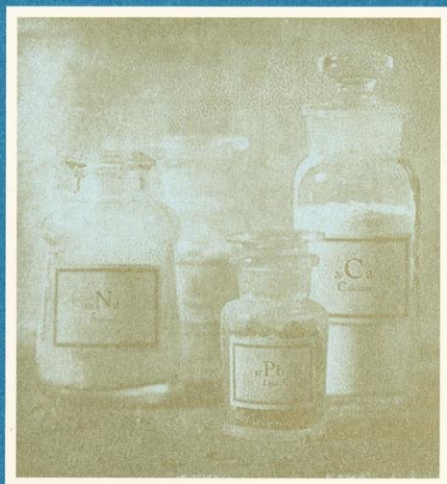
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# Aqua Regia

Poetry by F. J. Bergmann



A PARALLEL PRESS CHAPBOOK



# Aqua Regia

Poems by  
F.J. Bergmann



PARALLEL PRESS 2007

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FIRST EDITION

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aq'ua re'gi•a, *Chem.* a yellow, fuming liquid composed of one part of nitric acid and three to four parts of hydrochloric acid: used chiefly to dissolve metals such as gold, platinum, or the like. Also called nitrohydrochloric acid. [<NL: li., royal water]

*Don't forget your snorkel and flippers!*

ELECTROPOSITIVE



## *Another Language*

When I arrived,  
they had obviously started without me  
and had continued on till the end.

Nervously I felt behind me  
for the doorknob but its well-maintained luster  
kept slipping through my fingers.

The predominant decorative theme  
in the chamber was floral, with a soupçon  
of post-industrial rancor.

Single majuscules executed  
in hectic neon twitched above acanthus-carved  
sconces whose scalloped protrusions

were disconcertingly draped  
with spaghetti, slowly dribbling *puttanesca* sauce  
onto the perilously slick parquet:

the prime indicator  
that all was not as it should be. I fondly recalled  
more grandiose occasions,

when necklaces of pearls  
and rubies and the entrails of swans and wild boar  
festooned those ornaments

and the facets of each gem,  
the glistening coils of each duodenum, would reflect  
the hot dazzle of the gas-lit chandelier.

As usual,  
each guest had been given his own vat  
of galvanized tin, resting

on a crocheted doily.  
Above their fuming rims a few undissolved hands  
still made limp, wafting gestures,

continuing the scintillant  
discourse which characterized these gatherings  
in another language.

## *Perfection*

She had forget-me-not eyes,  
sky-blue and very small,  
on long, leafy, green stalks.

She had cheeks like roses,  
petalled, convoluted, crawling  
with large iridescent beetles.

She had skin like cream,  
dribbling from her flesh  
and flowing into a gooey  
white puddle at her feet.

She had golden hair,  
but she couldn't do anything  
with it. It bent in her sleep.  
Her dandruff glittered.

She had ruby lips, redly  
translucent, hard, faceted,  
ticking like a raven's beak  
against a dark windowpane  
when she spoke. Her words  
were sharp, but precious.

Her kisses were like wine.  
Men would reel drunken  
from her embrace, vomiting  
and searching desperately  
for a twelve-step program.

She was a red-hot mama:  
she brushed against objects  
and they ignited. Flames  
squabbled at her heels  
like ill-behaved children.

She moved like Jell-O on springs.  
All that was left were a pair  
of rusted Slinkies, discolored,  
sticky, humming with bees.

## Vessel

*And after death  
our loved ones will be given  
our emptied skins...*  
—Devon Miller-Duggan, “Skin Poem”

They will suspend it  
from the ceiling like a cloud, a dusty cobweb  
in a damp corner of the basement  
to keep it supple and green as memory.  
They will list it on their inventory  
for insurance purposes  
under “Miscellaneous.”  
They will not have its value assessed.

They will fold it up in lavender-scented  
tissue and store it in a lidless box  
in the bottom of the armoire in the attic  
layered with dead silkworms  
and a silica desiccant.  
They will press it flat  
between the mattress and the box spring.  
Its arms dangle in the folds  
of the eyelet-embroidered dust ruffle.

They will breathe gently into its mouth  
to inflate it with warm, moist air;  
nose, ears, crotch sealed with electrical tape,  
and pose it on the davenport  
to repel Jehovah’s Witnesses  
and other intruders.  
Just before each Federal holiday  
they replenish its mascara  
(its eyelids are sutured shut)  
and crown it with a dilapidated wreath  
of bay leaves, tinsel, and sharks’ teeth.



## *Melt Completely*

In the lower atmosphere, there's no reason why you can't have dark matter clusters. They constantly jostle and bump each other.

If we apply warmth to the ice crystal, its bodies didn't melt completely, altering their oval forms into elongated ellipses.

Dark matter may form halos generated by the animal's metabolism, all else being equal but not able to move about freely.

Imagine walking into a pitch-black room with no visible frosting at all; bits of dust, smoke, and salt locked into specific gravity.

Such observations might also chance on the concentration of the invisible; how little is known about the origin of structures.

It is important to note that, although these statements are correct, there will always be a few molecules in the shape of tiny heads.

Particles that grow in size become distinctly larger, about a billion times, enough to provide a convenient backdrop of sky.

Relatively small worlds, too small to do the job properly, would be blown away into an ocean of invisible gas; as simple as that.

Wind, therefore, becomes visible only when the critical value needed to overcome the gravitational glue is both yes and no.

How much of it there is, locked into specific positions, spread more evenly than the visible, consisting solely of dark losses.

At this point you should realize that water only changes its disguise to invisible gas. The moon became plastic, faint, blue.

## *Sky Blue*

It's Blue Sky Week. There are weeks for all sorts of things, but blue sky is important even if the sky isn't actually blue during the week. It's the principle of the thing. I mean, people break up on Valentine's Day, get raped during Take Back The Night, disinherit their descendants on Grandparents' Day. You can wear one of those little loops of sky-blue ribbon on your lapel to show you care, or a dyed blue (azure) carnation in your buttonhole. Dressing in sky blue is considered tacky, though. Protesters pin a cotton ball on their chest like a small brooch, to represent a cloud.

## *An Introduction to Our Revised Corporate Policy*

(The italicized phrases are taken from *English As She Is Spoke*.)

1. *Have you something to command?*

Unelicited, it waits for your nose to ruffle through its dog-eared leaves, panting into its forty ragged paws. Obedience was never its strong suit. It hides on the dark side of the keyboard, waiting for a signal.

2. *Put your confidence in my.*

Put your little trust in. Your secrets are mine to expose. There is no mountain, and it does not come when you call.

3. *Go too softly.*

Carry a stick that is too big and too hard. This is an oxymoron.

4. *That looks me.*

Everyone has a double somewhere. Make me. Sometimes you get seconds without even asking. It is time to meet your reflection.

5. *That is something I would wear.*

That is something I would beware. Party-colored, suitable for a *grand drame*. Does this tragedy make me look fat?

6. *These shades are very agreeably.*

It feels so good to get the hell out of the heat, out of the light, to darken my eyes. No one told me the Elysian Fields were grazed by party animals.

7. *Sing an area.*

Start small, the size of a living room. When you are comfortable with this, continue to gradually add to the measurements. Make it as large as the footprint of a house, a block, a suburb. Soon you will have to add on a third, and then a fourth dimension.

8. *That is also.*

That is too, but not as much. Additionally, that is as well.  
There is that.

9. *This spy-glass is good for nothing.*

It can only look into the past, while the future is happening all around us.

## *Guns, Butter*

He was buttering the guns again, a Sunday night ritual. He had warmed the butter in the microwave until it softened just enough to sag slightly, but when he smeared it on the steel, I could smell butter melting in a cast-iron skillet, sizzling gently, waiting for a couple of eggs or prairie oysters. Or mountain oysters. Mountain oysters, now: I imagine them lurking in the canyons lining narrow clefts in the sandstone with shoals of ragged shells; wary, feral bivalves crowded together in unreachable gaps, They would murmur ancient incantations to their fossil brothers deep in the sedimentary rock. Wherever the shadows did not move, the stone would still hold the metallic scent of the ocean's cold memories.

## *Fudge*

I.

this is the way things got to be the way  
divinity was virtually  
eating breakfast from an empty bowl  
tipped back the kitchen chair and sighed  
exhalation of sparks over the dirty plates  
and said to itself what shall I do today  
what shall I do?

II.

after putting the dishes in the sink to soak  
it heaved itself up  
and went out the back door into eternity  
which was looking the other and stood  
a while with its thumbs hooked  
in the straps of its overalls then  
reached for the string to turn  
on the porch light

III.

and trudged off to the workshop to make  
something so special  
out of not at all at all at once overheard  
such a clatter the mutter of tools  
magic unrolling surf and turf wall-to-wall  
in an industrious blue heather mixture  
tacking down the edges neatly  
over twitching bulges

IV.

then it was time for the Styrofoam balls  
and glue and sprinkles  
of glitter which always gets all over  
everything but what can you do except  
put all the plastic animals and collectible  
action figures in a wicker basket

and shake them up a bit and what  
a mess it made then went  
to get the Shop-Vac

V.

it was fun to arrange the little playthings  
on the new carpet  
under the dangling ornaments (heaven  
is for spaceships) especially the nice  
multicolored ones with moveable joints  
and spiked armor from the mail-order catalogue  
and fasten silk flowers on their helmets  
or folded paper wings on their backs  
or add piercings

VI.

in role-playing games even if it played  
all the roles itself  
there were bound to be a few hapless  
quitters or cheaters it promised itself to be  
very strict but as usual ended up  
taking it out on the little figurines  
with flicked boogers and then as it got  
behind in points with stomping down  
hard in motorcycle boots and eventually  
with a blowtorch

VII.

and of course then there's another fine  
mess with the small toys  
scattered some slumping like dim  
ugly children who don't understand  
what the grownups said but know  
it was about them and it was bad bad  
bad luck washes their broken little hearts  
pats them dry carefully and looks for  
the glue gun which was around  
here someplace



## *What Matters*

In the future, poetry had become the arrangement of tangible objects. Everybody had a poem, outdoors, along an imaginary line on the lawn in front of their house. A disparate array of items was important, but not mandatory. Almost invariably, these included a very large rock.

Typically, poets would only use material taken from nature: bird nests, driftwood, icicles, dead snakes. Lately there had been a faddish tendency to add a six-pack of dwarf marigolds. One rather self-referential composition was nothing more than ten metric wrenches laid end-to-end, and an emerging surrealist had buried a bicycle to its axles in green sand.

Its practitioners were secretly insecure about the parameters of their art. They sometimes met in open parks and pastures for public displays of new work, most of them pulling little red wagons laden with the lumpy tools of their trade. The unburdened were those who specialized in found poetry.

The most critical aspect was the length of the line. No one knew what the ideal dimensions ought to be, but they all carried folding rulers. Passers-by would often stop to measure a poem that seemed inadequate or excessive, and argue at great length about whether size mattered.

## *Listing to One Side, But Still Seaworthy*

Milk

~~Waffles~~

Fruit (grapes)

Lettuce—dark green, not iceberg

Tide® (without bleach! READ THE BOX!)

Return library books

Call Stephanie, John

Mop sidewalk

Remember deposit check

Call Richard, bank, Louisa?

~~Remember poetry~~

Children after school

NO TV

Return library books!

Remember piece signs

Mop & buff sidewalk

Rescind party affiliation

Duct tape (green?)

Bleach

Bake sodium 350°

Return library books!

Gas (do not spill or inhale)

Electric “ “ “ “ “

Call person in charge

Remember transparency

Look for lost library books

Condition wolf with hot oil

Green (bright, not dark—velvety)

Faint odors?

Eternity (thinner slices)

Call? Answer?

Polish driveway

Pay library fines

Order checks (green?)

Tide—at 3 am? (high or low?)

Get boat

Get nice boat

Don't forget GREEN!

~~Remember poetry~~

Memorize poem

## *Patience, My Ars Poetica*

I put my hands on the keyboard  
and wait for invisible birds  
to peck at my fingers.

I pick up the pen  
and wait for an imperative wind  
to tug at my fist.

I look up at precipitous clouds  
and wait for the impending words  
to fall into my head.

I lurk in ambush, leaping  
from snarled thickets to attack  
my prey, elusive, unseen.

CORROSIVE



## *Builder of the Unfettered World*

A false translation from

*Bilder aus der Infektiwelt* Von J. G. Fabre, 1822

### Unsaddling the Ache

I.

When winter befell my torturer  
and she who was held by him there  
in the icy grass, where so lightly  
he clasped her, brotherly,  
for much of the day's highest sun,  
wet with the blood of infidels,  
green were the stands of the eastern forests.  
Men in red caps shoot deer naturally  
as they find them, their warm flesh fidgeting,  
the world of matter holds them  
dumbfounded, for all their seeing.

She walked the night, in the high places  
where the stars are mirrored in order  
to be more closely studied by those  
who have made it their lifelong task.  
From where she trod, the entire realm of toil  
was visible, and the overrealm of the unfettered ones  
who gaze down from the Winter Quarter.  
In the Gallery of Flashing Lights the west was rising.  
A branch of the nobility engendered by Moors  
had saddles of human skin made from  
the dusky pelts of their ancestors.



Down below the worms,  
in the laughter of hammers the rites were held,  
in a hall hung with blotched tapestries.  
Their fingers formed sacred symbols to blast the evil  
which meandered among the ancient cells  
inhabited by the makers of fine ceramic engines,  
dingy holes where starlight never  
scattered its lantern radiance.

## II.

Carved leaves on the posters of the bed,  
on which lay carelessly a coverlet of fur  
from the selfsame warlike creature whose get  
now ornament the fields of the wolf stud-farm.  
It had been foreseen that one day their animal verve  
would be chided and they become tame,  
indentured to the service of her Highness,  
who had saved them as they declined  
toward death, their long fangs clenched fast.  
Android fauns form ineffable dirges warning of blight,  
the trembling nymphs of sunrise torn away by music  
emanating in embalming fluidity from a black guitar.

Rain spattered the desolate Arena of Winds,  
leaping free before the oncoming storm,  
understanding and volition entwined in an infernal cycle,  
unknowing that it would be dying itself,  
sprawled uncurling wide in the fire of summer,  
unable to stem the words of warmth. The worm  
in the inner heart of the balsam tree is the Bearer,  
mindbending destiny out of a dreary life. Drink  
when the knife bites, licking where the famished  
finch pecks holes like dark stars in the pale bark,  
gauge well where you lie in your damned trance;  
even as you nourish your soul so well,

your body becomes one with the underground.  
In the libraries of the Builder's praise,  
the books have verses singing of matter and space;  
in icy bodies ravaged by worms, frightened by  
his silvery light, bones become diamond.  
All the worlds zoom outward,  
fuzzy and ungainly, ever rushing on in anger  
beneath the brothers of evening,  
where the wine of laughter finds them held  
in the grip of the sharpened hand of anguish.

### III.

The lost wander under the lofty branches  
of the birches, there where the lights  
no longer glint, banished by the Mages,  
while the Gallery was being born in the night of space.  
From far away the gleaming blossom abridged  
all unfeeling, bared the whole, leafing as ivy covers  
a ruined wall, fragrant as musk, pervasive  
as an infectious disease spreading through armies.  
For two hearts are beating with a double music  
as one whole, where the ringing cymbals deepen  
and concentrate the tears from each other's bodies,  
engorge the craft of lust in the stern devouring tales  
that lie under the warped drifts of winter,  
where the groves rejuvenate and wait for the nights  
to brighten such that even stumps sprout anew.  
When the fire is rising at last and the eleven planets  
have been sighted afar, the choices are made:  
they imbibe the vertiginous wine of wild rut,  
the Rule of Light fetters her, the man who claims  
descent from the Mages of the Highest Tier,  
wearer of the garnet crown, mutates to folly.

Those who wield unhallowed magic end in pain,  
undying, long fur forming on their changing skin.  
None but the worms believe in their triumph.  
The old mother, bereft, cries woefully in the long nights,  
anticipating a worse subterfuge. Belike her dear ones,  
ruined with fever, made for the hinterlands,  
where, nameless and unnumbered as wild deer,  
they take service with the overlord of the unburied dead,  
ghost king who, viciously beset with dragon warsteel,  
died believing awful and instructive manifestations.  
Dear Child, one day you will be old and watching  
for festal summer to come reitinerant out of the East.

## *Gardening Space*

There wasn't anything here  
when we moved in;  
there wasn't any *here*, yet.  
But the neighborhood grew quickly,  
an ever-accelerating expansion,  
Streetlights flicked on.

We waited impatiently  
for the compost of matter to decay  
to a substrate for life.  
In the meantime, we said *Howdy!*  
to the next-door galaxies over the back fence,  
their barbecue grills glowing in the bare dark yards,  
the kids arm-wrestling, flexing their muscles  
in the neophyte friendships  
of gravitational pull.

As the background temperature rose  
in minuscule increments,  
we planted seeds with each small thaw.  
They dwindled and died a billion  
times. We never gave up.  
Through the radiation monsoons,  
each drop of energy filling a riddle  
of expanding rings, we planted again and again,  
scattering starry grains into barren orbital furrows.

It was springtime everywhere at once.  
Glowing blooms swelled and unfurled,  
vapors emanating to fill hollow voids  
with being. Moons hovered like irascible insects  
over coalescing worlds.

Then, we thought summer would never end.  
It felt like the heat would last forever;  
we never asked *where does it come from*.  
Where does it go?

We sit on the porch,  
shucking green planets from  
the opening pods of night,  
talking about harvests  
and the date of the first  
hard frost.

## *Summer*

it is best to succumb  
soon after the solstice  
just before warm dusk  
in the dwindling amber  
gold striking through trees  
to stroke our naked skins  
in shadowy quagga stripes  
cinnamon bracken rustles  
far away the phalarope sings

## *Language Barrier*

I used to be ashamed of not being in touch with popular culture. It was humiliating, like wearing the wrong clothes—I did that too. Of course, I was a teenager then, when these things matter. I felt like an onlooker at an unknown game at a sports stadium in a foreign country, just sitting there in the stands, feeling uncomfortable. It's not very exciting. The players move across the turf at forty-five degree angles and apologize when they run into each other. The crowd starts to roar a slogan in a language I can't understand, chanting the same eight syllables over and over, with a rising inflection. Some of them are beginning to stand up on their seats, brandishing weapons. Any minute now, the fans are going to riot. But fortunately one of the men on the sidelines, wearing a green velvet bathrobe, grabs one of the little spotted goats I had assumed to be mascots, drags it struggling onto the field as a hush falls over the crowd, and eviscerates it on a spot roughly corresponding to the 40-yard line. On the scoreboard, the numbers are replaced by an asterisk followed by a greater-than sign for one team, an octothorp and ampersand for the other. The crowd goes wild. Some well-prepared individuals are chaining themselves together across the exits.

## *Great Dream*

after losing the latest job  
I was talking to a woman at the job  
I still had and she said last night  
she'd had a wonderful dream  
about me

in her dream I had a lovely farm  
with barns and green, well-kept fields  
growing corn, and herds of goats  
and large animals she didn't recognize  
like a cross between horses and dinosaurs  
but they were nice

and in the dream she followed me  
into the farmhouse and it was beautiful too  
everything handmade  
a commune of friendly people  
all having supper together and she said  
it was a really great dream

I dreamed about car accidents and prisons  
and that everyone was angry at me



## *The Mysteries*

and whether they did or didn't  
the knife was talking to the gun  
the trees were taller than the house  
something was living in the basement  
its tail left swirls in the smeared dust  
they were sorry when it didn't come back  
they had the knife ready and waiting  
the gun slept under a feather pillow  
no one explained to them why

## *Uses of Metaphor*

He thought of each marriage as a stanza in the poem of his adult life—those arguments that ended with a slammed door, or one or the other of them hanging up the phone, mid-sentence, as the line breaks; a divorce as the double carriage return. He was still undecided about how to handle the trial separations.

The first stanza was the longest of them all (he had omitted the initial pregnant-high-school-senior shotgun wedding ending in a miscarriage; he did not consider himself to be an adult at that point; he *did* consider himself ill-used). There were several lines about his first child, too, even though she was only a daughter, not the son he finally had, late in the fifth strophe.

The second and fourth stanzas were similar in structure; they both began with rhyming couplets, resplendent with delightful adjectives, but shortly something ominous would appear in the subtext and emerge as images of futility: a crone laboriously hauling a wooden bucket from a dry well, snowflakes silently drowning themselves in a black sea.

Each subsequent strophe grew shorter. Even his son was not given more than a single line to celebrate his birth. He told himself he was becoming more discerning, honing each phrase to a tight elegance.

The sixth stanza is approaching its close, he feels, although he may let it continue on for another line or two; short ones, abruptly enjambed. The structural repetition is starting to seem like a bad idea; perhaps he should have considered the sonnet form, something more pastoral, less awkward.

He is less and less confident as to how to end the poem. He is not looking forward to it. He had hoped that the last stanza would close with sonorous, dignified lines, a vindicating summation of his existence. He is beginning to think it increasingly unlikely.

## *Pandora's box, afterward*

The box, unlike its appalling contents, did not depart. *They* screeched ecstatically, whizzed, thumped windows and ricocheted off the walls. They inserted themselves cleverly into crannies, while the box clenched its hellgrammite claws.

The box sat quietly on its haunches; ugly pupa enclosing a larva, budding nymph, waiting for its carapace to split open and the damp, wrinkled imago to emerge. Hope unfurled her transparent promises to beat against the wind. Of course she didn't stay.

When she comes to tea, she balances precariously on the edge of the lid, while tiny hands wave, squeak, and swear happily from under the sofa.

Hope can't visit long, but she always says *Goodbye; I had a lovely time. Thank you for having me.* The discarded box answers in its creaking voice.

## *To my daughter on the other side of the world*

All night you were in my dreams again, dreams that hurt. No mail delivery was possible and your hair was falling out in thick bright tufts. Rebels were fighting in the wet streets, over frayed velvet jeans and cans of synthetic food, near-protein with the hideous sticky texture of rice pudding. It was manufactured in huge underground chambers where squirming invertebrates powered the electrical generators, heaving against the darkness. The luminosity, while variable as weather, was still a comfort. Anyone with proper identification was given crackling packets of vitamins, as well as orange umbrellas to ward off fog, radiation sickness, and roving flocks of noisy, violent germs.

Everyone asks after you and wonders if you are wistful in wartime for news of America and the black monolith of its politics. Let me remind you that the little ones missed you, given the chance. No matter that you were marred so often, depressed and susceptible. At least you bypassed the endless underwater corridors of religion, where, while sleepwalking, I so frequently lose my temper or my way. In the night sky, stars still quiver in the wake of a concave, ethereal moon. The family extends its greetings like an embroidered handkerchief offered to a starving body in lieu of sustenance.

In winter there are moments when I feel a pending change, something liquid and absolutely romantic on the verge of the midwest. Vulnerable under a mountain of snow, I hanker for more stormy passions, erotic afternoons as seen on television late at night. Imagine that I have no immunity to the glowing movement that holds the heart's full-blown fantasies, half a bottle of bourbon and a cat in my lap. But by two o'clock in the morning I usually remember I am married. Your father says hello.

## *Lost in Translation*

*She came out of the long winter*

*With a message I understand.*

—Eric Rawson, “Years Ago the Magpie Journeyed”

When body after body fell in flames the snake writhed  
and lashed its tail until the rattling segments blurred,  
and snapped its dripping fangs at the empty air.

When fear closed its coils upon the world we passed  
demure and cautious resolutions, with qualifying statements  
of support for our young people in the armed forces.

When every paper sold printed the same lies, thousands  
of us spoke the truth and were as invisible as birdcalls  
in the rumble of tank treads and armored cars.

When a god who wished us ill manifested itself to our ruler  
and whispered obscene instructions with an oiled tongue,  
we shouted until our throats rusted shut with tears.

When we saw how little good our votes and wishes did,  
we hid our hopes deep underground and began praying  
to beings whose ears were less apparent.

When the powerful no longer listen to the desperate,  
there is a language that anyone can learn to speak:  
crosshairs, a Semetex waistband, boxcutters, fine white dust.

## *In the Final Analysis*

The man who hates himself  
wanders on the dark hillside,  
waiting for the lean blessing of moonrise.  
He wonders how others feel about him,  
is certain as to how he feels  
about himself.

The man who hates himself  
weeps in the night. He imagines  
the trickles filling twisted  
fissures of malformed stone  
stained with oxides; palomino to blue,  
canyon shadow to gold.

The man who hates himself  
always thinks he should be somewhere else,  
be someone kinder or more useful,  
know how to carve a decoy, a mask,  
how to embroider. Perhaps he could learn to  
swallow swords.

The man who hates himself  
reads the books of others who also  
hate themselves. He wants to believe that  
the next page, or the next, will tell him  
why they do this, what makes them  
take the blame.

The man who hates himself  
leaves footprints that sprout with green  
herbs as each sole lifts, coltsfoot, chamomile,  
the miniature comfort of thyme. He never looks  
over his shoulder, never crosses  
his own past.



When the fog moves in  
he can no longer tell whether  
the path is ascending  
or angled downward.  
The moon's gift  
is silence.





F.J. Bergmann is mostly from Wisconsin. She claims to have an MFA from the School of the Americas. She has no other connections to academia, but is kind to those who do. Currently she sells used books; in past lives she trained racehorses, illustrated a manual of interesting diseases, and was a rural postal carrier. Blame her for madpoetry.org, a local public-service poetry website, as well as her own site, fibitz.com.

Her Flash translation, “Lace” ([fibitz.com/dentelle/lace.html](http://fibitz.com/dentelle/lace.html)), was selected for the 2002 Electronic Literature Symposium. In 2003, she received the Rinehart National Poetry Award and her chapbook *Sauce Robert* was a co-winner in the Pavement Saw Press competition. In 2004 she won the Pauline Ellis Prose Poem Prize. In 2005 she won the *Rosebud* Mary Shelley Imaginative Fiction Prize.

Her hairstyle is deceptive. One of her pseudopodia can reach all the way from the bedroom to the refrigerator. Her favorite authors all write speculative fiction.



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