

Anthony Rintala – Two Poems

On Trafaldamore

Sprained ankle, memory,
folds into some Ohio
fall, shade of the trees
burnt furry orange,
the way the light stains
from each dying leaf.

Chemical haze clusters
the sidewalk in carbon chains
of umber shade, mold
spore hung in constellations,
motes in a sunblown eye.

The Millenium Falcon
wrist-spun by some puff
jacketed child. Die-cast, breaching
across macadam. Laughs
leap away. The rule is stay
out of the street, but the paint
specks white scores across.

Somewhere, under leaves,
the shudder of trucks.

New Years Eve in some swamp
dive, Alvin pleading for his hula
hoop for the so-manieth time,
I watch some guy, fold himself
out the glass-slat doors and the
hammer fist that skipped
his face through the air
and into a stop sign
which, soundless, shimmered.
Man and sign spun out
into the street, puncher avanting.

All injustice is the same,
the cruelty of whim,
the myth of deserve,
the silent sound of reason
chipping across asphalt.

Muddily Must

to Kurt Vonnegut, Jr

The future pads in again,
like your dog, to balance herself
on your foot--egg on spoon--
and tilt back, ears on your knee,
to look full into your face,
not judging, but basking in judgment.

Now, you'll always have been dead,
remembered well, but remembered dusty,
your life plotted until this point—get it?
Deadline colon punchline. All laugh, stop.

When I saw you read, you had just
survived a fire, burning to be alive,
wanting a smoke. It seems tasteless now,
joking about dying, disrespectful to some other
Kurt who can't be retrospective as you lived.
The eulogists get it wrong; they put the art before the corpse.

The book you read was about wasted years repeated
repeated, relived. It still is. They all are now.
We get it now: all laugh, stop.

Anthony Rintala is an instructor at the University of Southern Indiana. His work has most recently been published in *Kudzu Magazine*, *Muse: A Quarterly Journal*, *Ishaan Literary Review*, *Oklahoma Review*, *Copperfield Review*, *A Few Lines Magazine*, *Mad Hatter's Review*, *Foundling Review*, and *St. Ann's Review*.