

Joan McNerney

Eleventh Hour

Wrapped in darkness we can
no longer fool ourselves.
Our smiling masks float away.
We snake here, there
from one side to another.
How many times do we rip off
blankets only to claw more on?

Listening to zzzzzz of traffic,
mumble of freight trains, fog horns.
Listening to wheezing,
feeling muscles throb.
How can we find comfort?

Say same word over and over
again again falling falling to sleep.
I will stop measuring what was lost.
I will become brave.

Let slumber come covering me.
Let my mouth droop, fingers tingle.
Wishing something cool...soft...sweet.
Now I will curl like a fetus
gathering warmth into myself
hoping to awake new born.

Joan McNerney's poetry has been included in numerous literary magazines such as *Seven Circle Press*, *Dinner with the Muse*, *Blueline*, *63 channels*, *Spectrum*, and three *Bright Spring Press Anthologies*. She has been nominated twice for *Best of the Net* in 2011. Four of her books have been published by fine small literary presses