

# Blaze VOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

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## **Glen Curtiss**

A bicycle racer before you met Lena, setting  
The world speed record with a tomato can  
For a carburetor. If Wilbur had died before  
Tennyson, you might have been the dream  
On the lips of flight-obsessed boys across America.

## Breaking

Deciding she was alive/  
that was the first thing. Stars

in the sky again, coleus  
in their epigrammatic color:

admirable. Drifting from afternoon walk  
to saturnine conversation, beginning  
of acute ache  
of desire for other things. A newness,  
the confliction. So easy, forgotten  
by women whose lives she sometimes intersected.

Feeling like an interloper, or merely  
incidental. An incomplete orchestra  
missing its percussion, the strings tight.

Deciding  
she was alive,  
she auditioned players, found  
her timpani.

"I'm a human battery," she explained –  
apologetically. Harry Smith  
was sure he discovered her  
in the Museum of Non-Objective Painting while compiling  
his archive. A man I knew in New York  
said she was the second stanza  
in a song he once heard at CBGB's. After  
several years of napping on lawns all over the city,  
I saw her in a bar, parsing  
white wine as though it were poetry.

I am told/  
that sometimes things just fall from the sky,  
and no god will answer for them.

I'm afraid of bridges, her promises  
and certainty. Because who exist like that  
but charlatans and fathers. And men who  
aspire to one or the other, like low-level confidence men  
who can't even convince themselves.

When we drove looking for a restaurant, I avoided  
the rivers, those places  
that could require machinery.

Please don't misunderstand me – there are photographs  
of her circulated . . . of course/  
"Woman at Kitchen Table," "Female  
in Repose," "Healing."  
I just hadn't seen them. But/

they were there: rivers. Those places that require  
bridges, intersections, interlopers. The oyster grey sheen  
of breaking.

## **Basin**

All that I know  
can be summed up  
in eluvium & freestone,  
bedrock & loam,

& emotion is not so fluvial.  
When I am a catchment  
basin, there is no distance  
between what I feel &  
what I live. I cry, filling

myself until the water pours  
over & my hands have trouble  
holding even the skin  
covering my palms.

## Apple Tree

Guiltier than Russell. Assigning p to the birch outside the house. In the fall, she told me, the leaves are like tiny flames.

Fp or Pf; it will happen every year. & she will stand near the tree, point 'See.'  
Fp. More sound than valid, more true than beautiful.

The tree that acts every fall like logic, convincing me that she will fall asleep beside me each night.

Doubt & fealty kept at the gates by truth tables Full of Ts & Fs. The birch dies despite  $(\exists x)((Kx \ \& \ (y)(Ky \ \rightarrow y=x)) \ \& \ Wx)$ .

She was angry. I was angry. Even though. We fought in silence for two days, fell asleep each night in a manner similar the days of the birch.

Found one compromise, but not another & considered planting an apple tree.