



Whale Spout

Janet Self

Monoprint using water-based ink
and created at Noyo Printworks, Fort Bragg

DISSECTION

Devi S. Laskar

— First Prize: Poetry —

The phone rings and a cop tells me he glimpsed the god of death
at the wheel of a stolen sedan, a drunken lurch

that has you living at the morgue and me picking out
what you'll wear to the afterlife—your closets bursting

with choices you'll never make again. Sirens coming
closer and for a moment I'm not in your tiny house

but standing at the glass of the operating theater,
watching the surgeon's hands wield a saw, cut you to the bones

to find out exactly what killed you. I wonder if he'll
notice the promise I left in place of your heart—I took

that from you a year ago, when we visited a gold dome,
its concrete oculus weeping rain onto a marbled

floor on a day like today; and you turned to me
and said, let's come back here every year until we're too old

to steal cars and pick wallets, hitch rides and siphon the night—
until the last thing we'll fight about is who'll die first.