

amputation

Maggie Hoppel

we don't look—we chop
one hand with the other,
one hand with the knife,
one hand on the stump
and we stick it in the snow
to numb the wound.
we toss the severed pieces
to the decomposers—we don't watch
what the fingers latch onto,
fumbling blindly for the missing
like a hungry newborn.
we go inside—we peel off
our coats. we are free bleeding
but we don't even know it.
when the hearth sings
us asleep (placing pennies
like a throne upon our eyes)
we dream of hemlock flowers—
sprouting like mistaken purity
out of a discarded palm.