

3 Poems



Rae Armantrout

SPURGE

Here the windows offer nothing
in the way of temporary death,

no metaphors
for old age
to be followed soon enough

by youth.
No secret formula.
Here everything is patent.

If there's a lesson,
it's to do
with eternity's hodgepodge

and the limits
of thought.
Who would think up

the muscular tongues
of the what's-it,
fuzzy and gray-green

next to the rattling
vertebrae
of fronds,

or that euphoria
(good form?),

formerly known
as spurge.

BLOTCH

1

“I am a bunny,”
and you are not

is what I meant.

That’s how it all started.

(“Not” felt something
slip
and was frightened.)

2

Oh lord,
may I turn all this
to my pleasure:

stiff leaf tumbling
end to end
in slow motion;

moving blotches
of shadow

that cover,
uncover

bright pebbles

SOME THINGS

“Nee Nee” and “Ah Ah,”

you’d heard the word before

and there they were—
two ants,

miniscule and flustered.

You were ecstatic.

*

As if each feeling
was a message

from a god

with his or her
own interests.

*

Glacial erratics.

Tossed off the way
one says,

“When I die”

I didn’t mean to fall silent.