

# FRONT PORCH

## **Beyond Thirst**

**Brian Dickson**

I'm in the other room  
extending my ear for the rhythm  
of your fish-gasps. Sister  
softens the ice on your lips.  
As the first drop spawns  
a river on the floor—glides

a calm stretch.  
When you think no one listens,  
worms dress in their best segments,  
make a list of your delicacies.

# After the Myth Retold in the Kitchen

**Brian Dickson**

Butter in the pan wheeled—

The hearses  
circled the cemetery, their lights tied  
to each other like elephants' tails;  
they roamed  
the graveyard for scattered bones.

While the rain-night carved  
the cars' breath, the stove's fire  
sucked back—

my breath too.  
The yellow still rounded the pan,  
and my holey spoon scooped  
for butter,  
dug for *forget*.

# Boulder Ridge on Fire

**Brian Dickson**

You knew flame would come  
at the brim  
of dusk:

stone cradles  
scrub oak  
big sagebrush

\*

trail

where lichens first flaked  
from limbs in their downward  
digression

\*

And here, on the carnival street,  
Tezactlipoca<sup>1</sup> dancers donning masks  
with obsidian orbs, turquoise foreheads, reflecting—

soaked hillsides   unctuous torsos   rage gut   burn down

at feet

spread of ash laden corn  
sifted off the first knuckle

\*

introspective noses held close to the curb  
for a smell of the yellow brick road  
in smolder gray

plenty of cameras mirrors with bright  
obscurity

\*

are we positive

in smoked mirrors

paths

the back palm clearing cheeks

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<sup>1</sup> In Aztec mythology, he is the Lord of Smoking Mirrors, purveyor of chaos.

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**Brian Dickson** balances his time between three realms of education with tutoring, farming kindergarteners, and teaching in the cyberworld. He enjoys spending time riding his bike to work and around Denver cultivating an awareness of things around him.

“Actually, there haven’t been many front porches in my lifetime, but I remember a dirt porch on a farm I used to work a part-time job during high school. This sacred place (if I may be so bold) is where you could never quite enter in the house because you have to recall the day’s work, the alfalfa fields, the hay bails, the plows, the heifers, and always the compacted basketball court. Of course there is some nostalgia—narratives arose from the june bugs, from the Natural Light, and the tabbies rolling in from a prowl.

What I have now is a small porch in Denver overlooking an alley. The alley light and I have accepted our share of the loss; loss not necessarily good or bad, but just is, as you attempt to search for a way to blend into the landscape.”