

Katie Cappello

Lament for a Rug

The rug that held everything together
is ruined, soaked through with black water.

It just kept coming out of the pipe,
chunks of fish, mold, someone's hair
swirled in a pool by the front door.

At the bottom my bare toe caught
the socket of a skull. I knew who it was.

I first dreamed a woman making love to a lion.
In a later dream her body was mine.

I stared over my own shoulder
into the mirror, left a message
on my mother's answering machine,

painted the walls of my coffin blue—
like bone under water, darling,
like your eyes.

Wet carpet gathers weight
under my body, and there's too many clouds
to see the last of the fireworks.

I remember when the lion burst into flame,
then the whole crowd yelled in unison,
Why don't you stay the night?

More weight. The sky pressed in on me,
and I went blind.

Katie Cappello's work is forthcoming from *Avatar Review* and *Exquisite Corpse*. Her first full-length collection, *Perpetual Care*, won the Elixir Press Poetry Award and will be published in 2009. Katie lives in a hundred-year-old farmhouse with three porches. This is practical rather than excessive, as the sun, at any time during the day, warms the steps of at least one of them. There Katie, nostalgic for the Arizona heat, can be found, sunning herself like a gila monster.