

# Joshua Marie Wilkinson

## Upholsterers' Moon (part 1)

a brief history of  
rain

collects on  
what the eye brings

down what animals  
sleep under

buzz-snap-buzzing  
in the vacancy sign

horseshoe-shaped  
meadow's bog

a bed as a rampart  
no more

rained-up unburied travelers

cutting down night

with their shoes  
& socks & stockings & noise

stockyard & upholsterers' moon

waxy windows eave  
crows a button  
to button up

lightning stuck  
in the pond  
to throw a bit of dark all over us

& you know  
where to find  
dust

here in the signature made  
small spilled into shadow

no telling the corollary of an affair

so then the moon  
drifting way too  
close gets leaky

going through treeline when  
a voice in the radio accidentally

says your name

how lying  
might ferry us through several parts  
of the month

a little  
blood on the underside  
of a toilet seat

we go dark  
into the fellow's letter this kitchen  
window is saying

something so we should learn  
to listen with the palms of our hands

fish pulled into the drinking water  
sucked into our sinks a glass of it

I talk too long on the message  
machine I forget what I really  
wanted to say

Max Roach is dead goodbye Max  
Roach go softly into the ground or  
earth

a dog is stranded on a raft in  
flood muck true

its parents long dead  
true

swallows gather up in the air again like

a bushel to pull the cartoon curtains shut  
true

nothing against

us standing out here  
waiting with Declan & cigarettes for any bus

we  
make our cupped lanterns  
& into traffic while it's

still wet  
caging us off

crooked Dublin we're  
sleeping more  
here less

there the staircase has its  
avuncular knowledge

the librarian is  
so lovely I start tripping & coughing

a diner of cudged-up phantoms

night asks for its devils back

yellow  
about the eyes old sea

goes frothing forth  
an opening in the floor of the room a  
book in his lap

no school in the floods flood's  
in the school &

hung pumpkins from the basement  
ceiling

you know this game do you

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**Joshua Marie Wilkinson** is the author of four books, most recently *The Book of Whispering in the Projection Booth* (Tupelo, 2009). He lives in the Rogers Park neighborhood of Chicago. He first read Armantrout's *Necromance*, Mullen's *Muse & Drudge*, and Blaser's *Moth Poem* on the front porch of 424 E. 1st Street in Tucson, Arizona.