

**ALLISON GRIMALDI DONAHUE**



*SELECTED POETRY*

i sat drunk at Dante's tomb 2 weeks before  
you died asking him what to do  
how to be better  
even from my self-imposed exile  
the lady behind me laughed as i asked silently  
for an answer

found a polaroid of the dog  
on the couch the summer  
before you died  
those are your legs  
the dog lies on  
no human face only human legs  
immobile dualistic  
the mind already gone to some other place

*SELECTED POETRY*

sometimes i run my index finger over my thumbnail  
to feel the anemic bumps—  
though nothing compared  
to your nails  
i am able to convince  
myself for a second that i am holding  
your hand

horses always appear in  
the rain  
chewing grass  
through fog  
next to old silos  
old caves  
old bones  
in switzerland  
the mountains here  
are not green  
if you, pile of dust  
could accumulate  
what kind of being  
would you be

*SELECTED POETRY*

once in geneva  
we were lost  
some colombian boys  
gave us a ride  
from france  
and we slept on cold  
lake rocks  
cold lake rocks  
where yr ashes  
stick in the summer  
                    rain  
the wind was supposed  
to carry them  
                    away  
then the birds came  
made footprints  
like it was summer  
they ate the soggy bread  
some asshole left  
                    behind

pour yourself into concrete  
like your name written  
in cursive beneath  
thick glass  
the mixture drips  
from thin fingers  
seeps through  
the weight of your  
liquifying body  
they paint red and white  
over you they blend  
make pink like ground beef  
your legs glisten in disuse



*SELECTED POETRY*

you pour yourself  
into the ground  
like silver dripping  
on the basement floor  
once ground  
the neon light  
the vice  
the freezer  
filled with  
orange juice  
concentrate

the invalid shines  
skin shines  
mind shines  
less movement makes the  
skin brain not lips soften

*SELECTED POETRY*

unused flesh gets glossy  
like a photo with a timestamp  
glowing orange in one corner  
yr feet round and red  
glide across the floor  
later  
glided

i have dreams  
where you bury  
things dig them up  
the dog helps  
sometimes and sometimes  
you are wearing a hat  
usually you dig  
for crystals  
and usually you  
hand them  
to me in a  
big woven basket  
over a small small river  
with no bridge

*SELECTED POETRY*

you were the only  
scientific person  
in our family  
and like grandma  
i find myself  
prone to calling  
a witch doctor  
all hours of the night  
pinning cash to the madonna  
licking my fingers  
doused in holy water  
after you die  
i trace my fingers  
along the rock in the garden  
breaking my stubby nails  
as i pick apart the granite  
in search of the  
                  ruby

when they turned you  
into mineral  
no one offered  
me an amulet  
to place an  
ex-human part  
hair  
a nail  
or a photo  
all these things  
are minerals now  
found in my elementary  
school chemistry  
set at the bottom  
of the basement stairs

*SELECTED POETRY*

in dying you became  
a plant since no animal  
can be so alone  
can't help but  
whimper and cry  
only a plant  
could ever suffer  
in such silence

in the garden  
chemicals change  
to living things  
the mineral  
the nickel  
the lime  
make mind  
plants nurtured by  
exhaust  
trains clatter  
fast rolling baseballs  
dump the used oil  
over the basil leaves



*SELECTED POETRY*

in the room i couldn't  
sleep as a child  
spat up warm milk  
lullaby on cassette tape  
until grade seven  
flung over the chair  
is the blanket you  
held onto  
dying  
in my bed  
we woke up drunk  
and sticky and pressed together  
before you went back  
to yr room  
tiny brown nipples  
in the front  
room of our  
railroad  
window

yr reflection in the empty shop window  
i put a coin in the vending machine  
knowing full well it's empty  
only cobwebs  
and i reach in to give you a gift  
take and receive  
i look to grip  
yr soft soft hand  
that is nowhere

*SELECTED POETRY*

as i declared i was  
done with modernism  
you felt me up  
outside the cathedral  
and mozart shoved  
another flyer  
in my hands  
trenzen you said  
means to drool

the flecks of light  
from the disco ball  
go across your face  
go across the white wall  
you go *i love you*  
i go blind