

LAURA NICHOLS

Sun Spots

A yellow snake senses heat
and sheds skin in a rock crevice.

Wake in pooled heat
shaking from a dream that fits like a wasp's nest.
Fine snakeskin in the bed sheets.

Lightning inflames an onion skin sky.
A diamond backed rattle snake scissors through sand
like a razor separating cocaine.

So why this inward push
to the adder
the kitchen stove's rings
early evening thunder?

At four o'clock in the afternoon
the sun hits the water
like a pheasant shot through the wing.
It makes no difference:
 letting a feather drop to the ground
 kicking a shell back into the waves
 pushing turquoise back to the grave.

In this sinking hour
touch kelp shed skin
passing through close coral
in and out of sun spots.