

JUDITH SKILLMAN

November Moon, Past Full

Pours its dead, mimetic light
upon the lilac, that shrub still posing
like the manikin of foliage
as if it were summertime.
Moonlight on the witch hazel,
which was ugly before and then again,
just after flowering. It was summer
so soon then it was over.
She wants to be taken in, to be as gullible
as before, but something has ebbed
in her. She feels no resistance to the past
and no anticipation for the future.
Knows the present long ago ceased
to exist—how plastic the words were,
how evanescent the vowels that taught
themselves to talk on her tongue.
If she worries too much, and her breath
grows shallow, the moon could fall to earth.
It would hurtle through the window
without warning, just as every other ball
to left field came close to her mitt
and then fell back to earth, scents
of grass and leather caught in her hair.