

## Remission · *Marcus Cafagña*

Walking home up the many flights after chemo,  
the harshly lit little room.  
Dark yellow grain of the wallpaper  
gleaming in the streetlight like stained wood.  
The silhouette of a face stares back from the window.  
I remember wet, green Pennsylvania mountains.  
The other patients in the bathroom  
with me, toking joints for depression.  
The doctors breaking skin for a good vein.  
Or standing on the edge of the surf  
at Boca Chica. Still a teenager joyriding  
with Angel Salazar, cutting the state  
of New Mexico in half. With a retooled Chevy  
across the desert after dark.  
Stopping later where the Rio Grande ends,  
both of us sitting there in the high sunshine  
with bottles of beer. A string of bubbles  
floating up the neck. How I envied his cool  
detachment, separating what had been  
from what was just beginning.  
His pidgin breaking over potholes like a salsa beat,  
those plastic saints standing  
above the radio, as if about to dance.