

CONTEMPORARY  
VERSE II

THE SPRING ISSUE



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*Four poems from MONSTER ENERGY/ULTRA BLUE*

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You have to praise ghosts  
So the ghosts eat praises  
Instead of eating you  
Rain falls on the neighbour  
Whose mind is disordered  
Who comes searching for cherries  
In the pit of winter  
The mist is waist deep  
And moving swiftly  
Right through us  
Carrying nothing  
Building the house  
It was born in  
Like the cloud-coloured wolves  
Trickling down  
From the mountains  
Like pale flowers falling  
From the mouths of deer

»

This year nothing survives winter  
Not even winter  
Down by the water  
A boy is visible but not  
Reachable: I have tried  
To be genuine but remember that  
In the half-light  
Nobody's hands are perfectly  
Clean. The dentist looks upon  
His garden with despair  
His disobedient dog  
Makes a water-rat perfect  
By shaking  
The rope is coiled at the  
Base of a willow  
What is this knot for  
For someone else to undo

»

Fragment of light  
Through the clouds  
Fragment of a saint's skull  
We cycle down one side of a valley  
And partway up the other  
Each small sketch will be repeated  
To highlight the author's progression  
Whenever he sang psalms a blinding  
White dove would circle and land  
On young Aredius' head, causing him  
Much embarrassment  
This went on for centuries  
Though the doves became darker  
And head much brighter  
There is a buzzing  
Parade coming into view  
Just below the churchyard

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After the invention of  
Boats it was still  
A long while  
Before anyone  
Thought of sails  
Then the black cloud  
Came for us too  
So now at least  
Three great springs  
Were coiled  
Ritual separation  
Of hand and hand  
And pocketknife  
The boys asleep  
Between tree trunks  
Dreaming of  
Every morning  
As the same knot  
Tied a different way  
And so named  
Something new