**Fruiting Body**

Expanding through narrow dead canyons to jut into air-infinity fills with beige and white, gills lining its underside. Stripes of sour milk render the cap’s edges brown, but there’s something of false size in visibility.

**Black Balsam and Ice**

You hold me tender and close in the early early Sunday light as I collapse through canyons of sheets like calcite, through ice that clings tight to the southern balsam boughs and the bed post just beyond my brow. How to I fall when I do, into the crevasse between mattress and frame while your collarbone coddles my chin?

**Spring**

With a scrape, neck’s nape to sacrum, my spine splinters the skin beneath her nails--stealing my sinew to pickle in springtime dew, she fills me with violets. Calling it renewal, she sugars my insides and bubbles away, dissolving their crystalline and peppering with specks of cattail pollen. The sucrose spreads like honey, butter layers my bones thick with purpled whitish color until I am canned-violet jam.

**Undiagnosed Concussion**

The crack in your skull still oozes. I hear it gurgle at night but I stopped changing your pillowcase nine days ago-the new stains shine unnoticed by you. Your nocturnal guzzling stream flows dry by day, an arroyo down the forehead. I have mapped it, charted its ebb and rise, but I still can’t predict its demise.

**Midwinter’s Ferrywoman**

Northern forest woman nestles in a cabin, deep in frozen boreal.

Coldest eve, the darkest night, she draws a bath with water hot enough to melt the frost encasing her window panes.

Dipping feet in, the heat envelops her.

Sweat from hairline to spine to finger, grasping the window latch--open.

“Cold souls seep in. Cold souls seep in.”

Winter complies. An invitation of steam serpentines through evergreens and suffuses the quilted forest floor.

The first to arrive-a fawn, spots stuck disappearing to grey. She shivers through the window. Hooves break the water, rippleless and gleaming.

Then, a snowshoe hare, old and frostbitten. A meager hop sends her paws over the tiled rim. She comes to rest, sweetly burrowed on the deer’s back.

The next to arrive comes clamoring in. Heat, like the scent of berries, guiding his chin. The cub, not fat enough to sleep, steeps in the bathtub, warm and complete.

Wildwood creatures continue departing the night, enchanted by the open sill’s light. Too soon the bath fills, water to brim, as cold ones displace the liquid within.

When the woman’s arms prickle, spent from the chill, she closes the window and they all sit still.

With the cold no longer keeping them awake the souls, in comfort, greet their fate.

Drifting, she shows them to close their eyes and bids them a warmer form of goodbye.

Lukewarm water lapping wakes her. Eyeing creeping frost, the crystals reach to new aurora.