

## Three Poems by Christine Hamm

### Landscape at Night With Bed and Fire

Hair caught on my tongue, I sing into  
your ear, my lips so quiet, so close,

they are signing with my breath the language  
under kneecaps, under ribs, under fingernails.

The room shudders, a bedful of red snakes;  
the room stills, a bedful of drowned plates.

Low murmurs from our palms, as if we  
had throats in our wrists, and you drift towards

the ceiling, splayed, smoky, while the curtains  
flutter and blacken, break into iridescent

loose sparks, spill out our window onto the dead  
in lines out on the lawn, waiting to enter.

*-Christine Hamm*

## Grackle

Wings gleaming  
like the slick oiled  
lids of a woman's eyes  
in an empty bar.  
Everyone and  
no one at once.

If you stand still  
long enough in the sun  
one will come,  
vain brother to the  
crow, blue simmer  
of feathers,  
landing oh so delicately  
to grasp at your  
spread thumb  
and peck  
whatever you  
offer from your palm.

*-Christine Hamm*

## Invisible Animals Crowd Round Your Face

Amanda Alisa Anna Bethany // someone is whispering  
names at the doctor's office// I am trying to turn my head to  
see// a goldfish is chewing his way through my palm//  
absent wriggling pain// when I wake up I'm on my back  
porch, my breath bleaching the air// the empty beech trees  
across the windblown lawn clatter then still// my back  
aches while I rake the horse stalls// the barn empty for  
years but sometimes I remember laying on the back of a  
mare, putting my cheek down along her neck, feeling the  
blaze of heat from her skin// somewhere there is a math in  
this// someone could calculate addition and loss// the wind  
knocks the shuddering barn door against its hinges// my  
daughter would have hands like me, this bent thumb, but  
smaller

*-Christine Hamm*