

Joanna Penn Cooper

I Thought You Said

I thought you said we'd meet in the middle.

I thought you said it would be spring.

Walk west, you said. I'll meet you there,
in one of the rectangular states. You said
something about the birds, the phoebes.

One was waiting on my front walk this morning.

Did you send it? You said you stared at the World
for a long time, thinking of me. I was
the World and you were the Fool. I wanted
to tell you that those are the cards of the beginning
and the end, and also of the end and the beginning.

What is it called, the snake with its own tail
in its mouth? Like that.

Poet and essayist **Joanna Penn Cooper** is the author of *What Is a Domicile* (Noctuary Press) and *The Itinerant Girl's Guide to Self-Hypnosis* (Brooklyn Arts Press), as well as the recent chapbooks *When We Were Fearsome* (Ethel Zine Press) and *Mud Woman*, a collaboration with Rebecca Bratten Weiss (dancing girl press). Her work has appeared in The Academy of American Poets Poem-a-Day feature, as well as *South Dakota Review*, *Zócalo Public Square*, *Open Letters Monthly*, *Poetry International*, and other journals. She lives in Durham, North Carolina.