

Two Poems by Jeff Burt

Beach Flats

The San Lorenzo River jangles,
a hammered dulcimer,
metallic, slurred
from two drinks too many,
water that cuts the flats
in half less like a tongue
than an incision, putting
poor tourists on one side
and poor immigrants
on the other.

An arm bent towards no good
a man with tats from the system
clocks the trees' shadow,
smokes, blows a gray cloud
that hangs, cusses, pisses
at some imaginary perpetrator.

The flattened sand flows with weed
passed dirty hand to dirty hand.
No filtered light for him
to menthol-kiss in, to fuss
the sass that's hijacked his train
of thought no locomotive pulls.

Moon at Seaside

If the moon is a hook looking
for hearts our lips come open,
we swim in the dark for the barb,
praying to be prey, to flop
be gilled, gaffed, stuck
on a stringer, coalescing, gorgeous.

Moon Jellies roll on the surf,
filaments that salsa
then foxtrot to the flux,
all lux and luminescence,
and our arms elongated tense
to the touch, feet dangle
at frontiers of legs in the flow,
our central systems nervous,
the cowbell of the sternum
pounded by the beating
stick of the heart,
our lips dying to be stung,
bodies caught, carried, numb.

Jeff Burt lives in Santa Cruz County, California. He has work in Treehouse, Typehouse, Windfall, Star 82 Review, Storm Cellar, and many others. He won the 2011 SuRaa short fiction award.