

Two Poems by Penel Alden

Four Picasso prints

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Are stacked
Piled tower
A gate to pass through
On the path to my bed
In each frame faces
An apparition
As permeable as my flesh
The pen's lines define
A good-hearted attempt
To pin ecstasy to limb
Thin ink extensions
In a failed divide
Bodies spilling into the nothing
That confines them

Ourselves here
My bed – its folds
Our bodies stretched
Beyond our reaching hairs
The very air
Feeding our million pores

Monterey Pine Forest

We are standing
Shifting weight
In an opening
Between the standing trees
Swaying gently
Calm between storms
Sweet smoke twisted branches
From the opening in the earth
Your mouth
Pressed between my lips
Then fingers
Between swaying trees
A sweet flower
I hand the joint back to you
But my motion is lost
Your face already turned to meet
A fuchsia watercolor sky

Penel Alden is the pen name of a mediocre and degenerate academic living on California's central coast. Her recent poetry can be found in *The Monterey Poetry Review* and *POSTblank*.