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ANGELA BELCASTRO

Inside/out

Each word curls back.

I tuck them under,
pleat image by image
backward
like paper folding,
caressed many times.

From a corner they slide,
vowels murmur, edge to surface.
I catch hold, cradle them inside:

all language needs a firm womb.

Outside,
words spill helpless like ether
and fall,
touching no one.

Angela Belcastro's poetry appears earlier in this volume.

PRISCILA UPPAL

Anacrusis

such to me, the missing foot I was meant to hear,
dropped accent of an unknown country of my birth.
Mother, your leaving meant my false beginning—
the extra long hours of study to fit into the scheme, foreign
toes like landmines, breath pauses like choked memories
I refused to contrive. Where do you sit and rest? Childhood
is the caesura of my tears—I have not held you long enough
to mourn you—I will be eight forever and ever. Unable to fix
a meter, a song, decipher your rhythm until we return to proper
places in line. Like Egypt, we must be known for our Queens
in order to claim worthy ancestry. Which sands do you sink
in? How damaged are these strings? Striking up a tune is
impossible without an instrument.

Priscila Uppal is a Canadian poet, fiction, and non-fiction writer and currently living in Toronto. She has published five collections of poetry: How to Draw Blood From a Stone (1998), Confessions of a Fertility Expert (1999), Pretending to Die (2001), Live Coverage (2003), and Ontological Necessities (2006). Her first novel, The Divine Economy of Salvation (2002) was published to critical acclaim and has been translated into Dutch and Greek. Her poetry has been translated into Korean, Croatian, Latvian, and Italian. She is a professor of Humanities and English in the undergraduate and graduate programs at York University. Her second novel, To Whom It May Concern, was published in Spring 2009.