



III, Us

Irritants of love,
living in the sift
of a beloved person: nothing

against the growing numbness
in my body. Things float
across my line of sight.

I am too tired in the evening
to speak, let alone to be the woman
you want. I catch the musk

and the fullness of you,
and then beneath it, my own
sweetish smell of illness. I wonder if I did this
to myself. I wonder if I broke,

aching so deeply.
I lost feeling in my mouth
and my arm

for an hour: what I mourned
was kissing
you, my hand
on your cheek.

Antonina Palisano

Antonina Palisano holds an MFA in poetry from Boston University. Her work has appeared in *The Massachusetts Review*, *Washington Square Review*, *Bellevue Literary Review*, and other publications, including the *World to Come* collection produced for Jewish Currents' Raynes Poetry Prize. Her poem *For H* was recently selected by Tracy K. Smith for the Best New Poets 2015 anthology. She has taught creative writing at the high school and college levels, and lives in Medford, Massachusetts.

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