

## Senior Division Poetry

Anna Swanson, St. John's

### **In which skinny dipping temporarily fixes a voice (an excerpt)**

*Note: All words except title transcribed from garbage found while swimming at the Punchbowl, St. John's, NL.*

You have come to speak one-on-one  
with the world. It is not danger exactly,  
just that your fire has become harmless.

Just that your hope tastes like aspartame  
& your thirst cannot remember what it wants.

You have become an illustrated book  
of hazards & antibodies & small careful passions.

Even your questions are plastic toys  
that make no mark. What is it you want?

The world holds out its world-sized  
palm filled with water.

Leave your bright packaging on the rock.

Make cold contact. Your face, your ribs.

Your assembled cravings

& damage. Stay under. Lose your left & right. Lose your receipts & your schedules & your adhesive outline.

Come back up breathless &

breathe. If that fire is harmless it is not yours. You are alive.

These are your fine fat facts.

This is your unsweetened tongue.

[...]