

# Garrett Caples

## Dark Candle

*for Maria Pilar Bratko*

my crystal forehead  
lacks a backbone  
o dark candle  
illumine me

my lamp is damp  
with doggy dew  
waterlogged shoes  
squish beneath my feet

laughter in my slaughter  
house drowns out  
touch of mothertough  
thought

i talk through a tank  
of my own design  
a glass bowl full  
of smoke

i draw hash marks  
on a calendar hung  
in a horrid corridor  
to idontknowwhat

destination. i walk  
backwards through time  
like those african guys  
who say the future

comes from behind  
because we can't see

the future. they know  
how it goes down

my past gives me  
the evil eye even as  
its highbeams ride  
my bumper

delight it, dark candle  
refuse its engine  
& change its regime  
another game emerges

from the margins  
of my bargain  
basement  
unconscious

teeth. i can't split  
my lips without a lisp  
like a venom viper  
in a denim diaper

my poison slips  
through coiled icicles  
i beg your dark apartment  
to thaw the thwarted

art of myself