

Camping

Our arrival in the night was greeted by
bats – their ragged paths,
our crooked lives,
pitched on a slope,
sliding down,
falling off the table,
slanting.

Sleeping outside I'm like cold cuts,
trapped in a canvas tabernacle,
nylon sack throttled,
rocks in my ribs,
ambushed and scruffy,
I awake slipping.
I don't belong here on an incline,
trying to hang on,
vigilant as prey,
sloping.

I want to wing with the bats – absconding
from caves, escorted
by echoes, wandering blind on the wind's whimsy, jaggling
through the ultrasonic night.

But in the morning the sun blazes like propane,
and all is awash in glintiness,
and the wandering becomes
weighty, and the wind
heavy, and we're staked down good into this
tilted ground,
like the tents that didn't blow away in the night, we're left
leaning.

Katherine Czerwinska

Originally from Chicago, Katherine Czerwinska has lived in Los Angeles for eight years. She completed her first chapbook this summer, *Ballerinas and Burning Towers*, and is at work on her second, *Mermaids and Mountain Lions*. She has a bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Illinois in Urbana and a master's degree in Education from the University of Illinois in Chicago. She is currently applying to MFA programs. Her poetry evokes the rhythm of music and the duality of human nature.

