

Amy Lee Heinlen

I Lose Him Near the Lumber

The fresh cut boards
smell of potential
and death
like early summer
meat on the grill

unload

this is what marriage is like
you unload the dishwasher

and i will load it up right
this is what marriage is like

i want you like a match strike
we trudge through rooms meals hours

this is what

marriage is like
you unload the dishwasher

Self-Portrait as Ostrich

I point my feet. Flex into the strong toes.
Wriggle up the feather duster tutu.
Up the long sleeve of its neck, I stretch through.
Roll on the scaly legs like pantyhose.

I jostle to recall how the dance goes,
with a few awkward steps I test soft-shoe,
I point my feet and push up to my toes,
wriggle my new feather duster tutu,

kick the Can-Can with knees hinged like elbows.
My pink head bobs, pasty thighs bare, aglow.
My feathers glee in the flounce of frou-frou,
thrill in the bounce as their underside shows.
I point my feet and dance into my toes.

Amy Lee Heinlen holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Chatham University, where her manuscript received the Best Thesis in Poetry award. Her poem, "Light, Blue," was awarded the 2016 Laurie Mansell Reich Academy of American Poets prize. Her poetry has appeared in *Rogue Agent*, *Pittsburgh City Paper*, *Pretty Owl Poetry*, *Pittsburgh Poetry Review*, *Olentangy Review*, *Mom Egg Review*, and elsewhere. An academic librarian, she lives and works in Pittsburgh, PA.