

POETRY | FALL 2014

Pink Slip

By Samantha Barrow

You stopped allowing yourself to want

At first, you were patient
expected to try again soon

but the body is grey now
an overcooked
leftover piece of steak in the fridge
ready to be chucked

it has quietly begun
to reek

Your beautiful precious sinewy sleek & floating
earthly transport—one minute so capable—
so on top of its game
gleaming
robotic in efficiency
doing the universal bidding

lost it

All that purpose flushed with a fetus
a giant drain opened
your chemical operations slowed
to a halt

Your concoctors of glow and possibility
stopped receiving their paychecks
and walked off the line
like Santa's sad gnomes in January
who know the North Pole is melting

You are left
looking out
over your body's deserted factory
watching the big bulbs
belled in thin metal—a drop
of moon dripping from silver
petal—flicker off
and grow webs

To your colleagues and students
your friends and acquaintances
it just looks like you're going through a fat phase
that you've let yourself go

Samantha Barrow is a poet, performer, writer and educator. She is the Director of Humanities in Medicine at the Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education at The City College of New York and teaches in the Program of Narrative Medicine at Columbia University. She is the author of *GRIT* and *tender membrane* (Plan B Press), *Jelly* (a chapbook, Tiger / Monkey Alliance), and *Chap* (self published) and has been published in *The Ledge Magazine*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Philadelphia City Paper*, *Off Our Backs*, *Lesbian Nation*, *Feminist Review*, *Edible Vineyard*, *Moonstone's Poetry Ink Anthology* and *Helmet Hair*.

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