

GEORGE EKLUND

Narration after the Last Freeze

What could I tell you in the aftermath?
The unpaid bills must sit there a few more days
in the light of an old man's face.
My own hands have begun to dry and wrinkle.
That I awaken tangled in frozen rope I cannot feel.
That a stray dog came to my porch in the cold
then disappeared on the first of March.
That I hear worlds burning when I start the old car.
That I remember the rain in northern Vermont,
how it does not solve the crime of being.
The highway hums from here to town
carrying people to their religions.
I have been half dressed all day
and the robins called me out to the mail
but I would not go.
That I am analyzing the therapist,
amazed at her calm nature.
I make solemn jokes against the walls
and spread salt by hand
all the way down the hill.
I stir up something on the stove, watched over
by a comical priest in my hungry head.
The light here is good, very good
from three directions I cannot name.
I show up for work and call my mother in Florida.
It would be criminal for me to complain.
I go drifting on my bare mattress
pulling from the dark waters

the small hands and faces
of my childhood friends.
And though I have ruined everything,
today I am fine, really fine.