

Frontal Assault on a Thunderhead

by Michael Fejes

In the distance it rose suddenly,
violently,
a great mountain of rolling mist,
spun from a knot of
5 warm and cold currents,
an angry tango of winds.

From this great mountain of rolling mist
hung straight gray cables of rain,
looking like charcoal sand
10 seeping from an ethereal hourglass,
slanting at an angle
that suggested the timepiece
was in mid-fall or that
it had come to rest,
15 propped against an unseen barrier.

I wanted to sprint to the base of that cloud
and leap into the air,
grasping those rainy ropes,
swinging back and forth,
20 climbing hand over hand
to the flat base of the storm.

Once there, it would have been easy enough,
I imagine,
to poke my right hand up
25 and to grab the soft edge
of the billowing cloud
and to push my toes into
its doughiness.
I imagined digging my clawed fingers
30 into its spongy surface,
a rock climber with no harness,
no anchors,
just cargo shorts, a T-shirt,
and sneakers,
35 sopping wet from a tricky climb
through the showers.



Higher I'd ascend,
stopping now and again to negotiate
the bulbous surface shifting beneath me,
40 considering, keen-eyed, which handhold
to go for before the wind
sucked it in, only to create a new one
too far away to reach.

Eventually, I'd summit the smooth flattop
45 of the storm's thunderhead,
a wide vista of white
the texture of soft-serve ice cream,
the temperature of a comforter
just pulled from the dryer.

50 And when I reached that plateau,
I would stroll to the cloud's edge
and plop myself down,
my rain-slicked legs hanging over the edge,
swinging back and forth.
55 I'd smile, watching the ground pass
easily beneath me,
knowing that no one had seen my
daring climb,
since they'd been shielding their eyes
60 beneath awnings made from their hands
or they'd been ducking beneath bat-winged umbrellas,
or they'd been sprawled on their couches
watching the colorful radar,
wanting only to know
when the sun
65 would return.

