

ALEX QUINLAN

Like Snowmelt Swarming the River

after Millay

enough of this grasping after purpose
when the black racer twines through the ivy
swerves toward the brown cup of the cardinal's nest the eggs
it holds the life in it and the life-taking
require no explanation nor does the glistening
of the scales when later sated the snake basks
on the white stone the light beating the rough skin risking
hawks and hands nor do the hands
one holding a saw for cutting ivy
the other weasling behind the sleeping head
to bring the snake to the child show it to her
nor does her look of busted glass sparkling need to be explained

yet in crown-most delight when the oaks loose
clusters of rust catkins stinking up the place
when the wisteria's thousand fetid hands swarm what's nearest
the daffodils and violets bloom in unison and I catch
myself looking for an idea to ascribe to the complementary
relationship between the colors an idea in itself

I get turned around come out babbling
like something missing teeth that beauty will in the end if only
because it has to suffice at least
when the weather thrills and does not last