

CHRISTOPHER HOWELL

The Circular Saw Children Confess Their Joy

We waited, of course, to become disks
as the sun and moon

and Mother's mirror. We thought
it would be perfect to be endless
edges gliding, perhaps flung
and cutting things off at the knees.

The cruelty of such circumstance
would not belong to us
but to the shape of us
merely, an accident of science
or a miracle or fate as, say, a sudden
bright blue rose rising like a cobra
beside a white gate.

We thought doilies, lids, and portholes
were our secret sins
wheezing in the hallway's dream
of flattened hats and all things orbital and thin
enough never to grow old.

We imagined the face of our round lake
a god or djinn
demanding sacrifice, which is why
we tied and threw our neighbor in.

"Don't worry," we said to his disappearing frown.
"What's drinking you, that perfect 'o,'
will make you one of us as you go down."