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## Signs of Deer

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## Signs of Deer

### Abstract

The icy breath of winter brushed  
my dun nipples alive. You thought  
it was the clumsy stroke  
of your hands.

### Keywords

poetry, poem, nature, sex, outdoors



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February 10, 2012

## Signs of Deer

Nora Hickey

The icy breath of winter brushed  
my dun nipples alive. You thought  
it was the clumsy stroke  
of your hands.

And I can't say that blue  
veins ran like rivers under  
your skin, because  
I don't recall anything about you  
except that your tongue  
trailed beads of saliva  
from the wet cave  
of my mouth to my shoulders,  
and I thought of the deer tracks  
I had seen in the snow.

I sniffed the air for a sign of their presence  
but the damp scent of animal did not  
stick to the blowing winds.

I needed a sign—a dropping rich with seed,  
a tuft of belly fur, a gummed ball of snot.

I wondered if you could taste  
my phlegm, if you too enjoyed  
the nutty flavor I conjured  
in one strong cough.  
You with the viscous cream  
coating my insides, driven out  
before you coiled your tongue  
round my tonsils, pressed the bristled  
skin of your stomach to my own.

When the deer saw me search  
for them in ridges of bark,  
underneath opaque ice,  
one flashed the white of its belly,  
a flag of warning to still the clouds  
billowing from their swollen nostrils.

The blanch of my limbs blinded me  
for an instant when you rolled off,  
heavy, like a roadside carcass,  
but it was too late to hide  
behind the evergreen  
that scratched at my window.

*Nora Hickey is an MFA candidate in poetry at the University of New Mexico. Originally from Milwaukee, WI, she is now enjoying the burger joints and mountains of Albuquerque. She currently serves as Co-Poetry Editor of Blue Mesa Review and has work forthcoming in Mid-American Review.*

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