

Summer 1995

Album Scratches #7

Patrick McCormick

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

McCormick, Patrick (1995) "Album Scratches #7," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 44 , Article 31.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss44/31>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in CutBank by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

Patrick McCormick

Album Scratches #7

I did this. I smelled toast. She read this poem. She said it was about eight thirty a.m. We discussed my pet theory: the fishtank. The phone rang. I sensed a poem. The aboriginal tone of her skin spoke French. I answered. I felt it was necessary. To me there is a word for everything. *Fatuity. Hypnogogic. Alb.* It was the city.

They were moving. We moved quickly. The old house was a big, squarish frame house that had once been white, decorated with cupolas and spires and scrolled balconies in the heavily lightsome style of the seventies, set on what had once been our most select street. But garages and cotton gins...the same old story.

It all started when I stopped reading Faulkner. The city limits stopped. We stopped talking about moving. We moved the bed. Behind it we found a poem. I will tell all that it said. Don't move. Outside there's a green sun and a yellow swallowtail fluttering.

Behind us there's a fruit in the big tree over there. Pluck it. She was always so good with her hands, with letters, names, and addresses. She wrote incessantly. I blame myself. The note said: *lettuce, wine, sandwich meat.* I waited at the grocery for hours. She arrived with the wrong message. There never was a tree.

Now I can begin. The ground was flat and warm. I slept easy under thick boughs. Across the tracks, the hills looked like giant panthers. You looked fat. I never said that. The hills looked heavy. The soil roiled black with nitrogen. The shade around us

turned turbid. The air of truth turned around us. I breathe and you exhale. I inhale your breath. We are too close. This economy must change. Picture this: six boys and nine girls. All the girls are smiling. I'm taking their photo. Am I wrong? It's the phone again.

Now no one will believe me. Scattered rocks of crumpled paper litter the linoleum floor while her platinum hair lights up the toaster. Do I know her prescription? Yes. It is inscribed with the words *oeuvre*, *sentient*, and *inertia*, on the wall above our bed.