

Winter 2006

from Shades of Death Road

Jill Magi

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Jill Magi

from Shades of Death Road

field-yelling crows a mockingbird
around new marble another dead

Stuyvesent flung open estate gates
rusting burned, the missing mansion

a search for foundations
at the slave quarters ends here

dead woodpecker at my feet
Quaker cemetery fenced

grave rubbings
a sooty history if the paper is large enough

historical marker
in metal relief contains

sighs permanence the cold
of history atop loaming

, or

were abolitionists
throughout

(while we learned to spell you don't tary
at the cemetery)

lost, we

“write it down
Heller Road in case

”

right off

around blind

turns,

mirrors

chip and tar vectors toward
a house used to be our walls shifted up, down

modern swath of earth now cut
mounted by a new colonial ground thaw

still won't absorb flood waters
a valley lined by old

disfigured rock walls
its pasture pre-dated our (idea of)

cow corn or people corn

nestledness

I sat on that rock at the base of the hill
in the crook of the turn

declaring that I would become a naturalist
as cars slowed down to

see if I was alright
writing

Dear Miss New Jersey,

come on out!
watch the pigs at Ervey farm & count

chipmunks, walk in rows of corn, grab at clusters of
queen anne's lace, do the buttercup test

those croaking frogs equal bad weather approaching
so come

look at my quilting