



#### BIOGRAPHY

Jason sits in a room,  
His figure framed by white walls.  
He is so small, so grey.  
The lady with the nametag feels it  
And visits his corner chair.  
Jason smiles; the woman speaks French.

Born into a fisherman's family,  
He grew up eighteen years  
On the stoops of Baltimore's rows.  
Well read and schooled,  
He mended nets, cleaned haddock,  
And spoke perfect French.

At twenty, Jason owned the business.  
He married a woman with simple tastes  
And had two blue-eyed sons.

In middle age, Jason sold the market  
And bought a delicatessen.  
His wife waited checkered tables  
And his sons went to college.

At sixty-six, Jason had no waitress.  
Christmases retrieved his children  
And their round wives.  
The elder son carved the turkey.  
The women cleared the table.  
They always left before dark.

#### AT THE BEACH

An angry snap, a silver ball  
Plunges up  
Lights flash on, off  
The whole arcade rings.  
Smells of popping corn and hot  
Fudge sizzle  
Between the pinball machines.  
Outside on the boardwalk

You feel half-  
Way between real  
And fake. Neon arrows  
Ribbon the side of the  
Rollercoaster, point to the shore.  
On the beach

You look up: black  
Sky wraps a scoop of moon.  
Foam seagulls string  
Ash-colored kelp.  
Conch, cockle,

And periwinkle chips spangle  
The sand, a piece of  
Scallop lances the beach  
Like a broken tiara.

Moon crinkles water  
Into tin foil:  
Light splices.

by Lynn Heather Gibson



#### AFTER THE DEER

We never take tractors  
Trails: we go the hard way.  
My sister and I stumble  
Over mud pocks:  
Holes chiselled by woodchucks,  
Snakes. We gouge our boot  
Heels into the mire,  
Leaving our own deep scoopings.

At the waterhole,  
We find mesh skimmers.  
Trim the pond of leaves.  
Reeds, bark shreds.  
The water has to be perfect:  
Animals drink here.

We dive off chunks of exposed  
Clay. The water slaps our skin;  
We look down at our moss bodies  
And laugh in howls.

We drip,  
Wrap ourselves in blankets.  
Hunch close between sprays  
Of blue spruce.  
In the half-light

We mistake tangled branches  
For antlers.  
At our feet, doe and buck prints  
Make a fragile map  
Of the longings we have missed.