

Fever

By Hailey Leithauser

The heat so peaked tonight
the moon can't cool

a scum-mucked swimming
pool, or breeze

emerge to lift the frowsy
ruff of owls too hot

to hoot, (the mouse and brown
barn rat astute

enough to know to drop
and dash) while

on the bunched up,
corkscrewed sheets of cots

and slumped brass beds,
the fitful twist

and kink and plead to dream
a dream of air

as bitter cruel as winter
gale that scrapes and blows

and gusts the grate
to luff

the whitened ashes from the coal.

Source: *Poetry* (December 2009)