**Fierce Magic**

Benjamin Green

Sunlight is a fist;

January ice, a blade.

The canyon is a small gash,

A tear in the fabric

Of a planet I cannot

Really imagine,

A speck at the edge of a galaxy

In the midst of vital nothingness.

This flowing spring: a pooling

Of hot water, sulfur, and

Calcium carbonate

Surrounded by snow drift—

Is a pulse, the heartbeat

Of the perseverance

And prevalence of life.

Early autumn, the chamisa bloomed.

Now the furry seed heads

are flowers of snow crystal.

An elk breathed a last gasp

In the dry grass,

Waited for vultures,

And ravens, maggots,

Heard the old song of flesh to dust.

Today, the creek undulates

Past bleached bones toward canyon—

Follows the true map

Of pine to cane cholla,

Tracks the loneliness of the wind

Through a beauty

That never demands perfection.