

## Holly Day

### Fade to Black

In my movie  
the Rapture will only lift the broken, burnt  
bodies of the people who caught the first hot wave  
of the bomb blast, locked outside the lead-lined  
steel-girded and concrete-shielded cathedrals  
housing the elite of humanity. In my movie  
angels and seraphim will lift only the dead  
lying in the streets outside  
the crumbling ruins of civilization

the children barricaded beneath  
kitchen sinks, huddled against one another

waiting for their parents to come home from work  
or the store. In my movie, the upper  
echelon of society  
will emerge from protective cocoons  
stocked with cases of tinned meat and  
sparkling water to find they've inherited  
a world burnt beyond recognition, unfit for  
habitation, abandoned by God. In  
my movie, these people will fall to  
the ground, scream, "Why, why, why", or some similar

cliché, just before the picture fades  
and the screen grows cold and black. It's not  
a perfect ending, but it's all  
I'm able to come up with.

## Midnight Caller

at night the  
angry thud of the  
dishwasher

sounds like monsters  
the groan  
of the house quietly settling sounds like

prowlers  
I can almost see the deranged face  
of my family's murderer pressed against

the glass  
sliding doors.

## Take It

folded wolf  
soft flesh beside me, I  
am so hot, unfurls into something I know

baby bird above me, wolf  
clutched in its beak, I  
touch the white skeleton man, push it up, I know

what you want, man-child, wolf  
creature, put it in my head, through my head, I  
dream in kaleidoscopes, know

love for fractions of seconds, wrap me in sick sweat, wolf  
spit, take this burning I  
am almost burning--rip me up, make me know.

## From the Garden

I come in from the garden and I'm covered  
in slugs. Tiny slabs of snot with antennae waving  
slowly moving over my sandaled  
feet, pausing in confusion at trying to pass  
a particularly thick black ankle hair  
navigating the rough etched surface  
of a heavy Tibetan silver bracelet.  
I don't touch my hair because  
I don't want to know they're there, wrapped in tangles  
dreadlocks with chewy centers.

I pull my clothes off by the washing machine  
and start the hot rinse cycle immediately, reconciling  
my guilt at running the washing machine  
with only two items of clothing in it  
with images of hordes of horrible soft bodies  
tumbling through the soapy water with my clothes  
hopefully boiled alive. If there were more clothes  
in the mashing machine, the slugs would be trapped  
throughout the load, might find sanctuary  
in sweater pockets and socks  
might make it out  
alive.

## My Places

All my favorite places have been overrun  
by kids who look at me as though I'm  
some old lady who lost her way, stumbled  
into their club late at night on the way  
to buy last-minute groceries or some important  
old lady medication

all of my regular haunts are being haunted  
by children who don't understand how important  
these places are to me, children  
who will grow up to become boring adults  
have boring jobs, live boring lives  
forget why they ever came to these places  
and will wonder about  
strange old ladies like me.

## **The Things That Need to Stay With Yesterday**

I wake up and I  
can still feel them in  
me scratching my skin

with callused hands and  
ragged nails get back  
I mumble in my  
sleep get back to be-  
ing dead.

## **The Snowman**

we drive our stakes and shovels through the heart  
of the beast and pray for an end to  
winter. we stomp on its head, kick its black coal eyes  
far across the yard and take back our  
old clothes from its body. no more snow,  
we pray. no more cold.

the snowman lies where we kicked it down  
arms outstretched in supplication, begging  
for mercy against the onslaught of our  
thick winter boots, lit torches  
paper packets of early-sow seeds  
held close to our chests in anticipation of spring.

## **Fred**

the vampire stalks into my  
room his eyes are big black holes  
in his head he looms over me, claws  
outstretched, the stench  
of the undead on his breath. my heart  
dies in my chest

at his approach, fangs bared  
lower jaw quivering

in anticipation of my  
surrender, of the inevitable  
spurt of blood destined to stop my life  
what I am—I don't want to  
die here, not this way

## About the Poet

Holly Day's poetry has recently appeared in *Asimov's Science Fiction*, *Grain*, and *Harvard Review*. Her newest poetry collections are *In This Place, She Is Her Own* (Vegetarian Alcoholic Press), *A Wall to Protect Your Eyes* (Pski's Porch Publishing), *Folios of Dried Flowers and Pressed Birds* (Cyberwit.net), *Where We Went Wrong* (Clare Songbirds Publishing), *Into the Cracks* (Golden Antelope Press), and *Cross Referencing a Book of Summer* (Silver Bow Publishing), while her newest nonfiction books are *Music Theory for Dummies* and *Tattoo FAQ*.