

Rachel Smith

*Magnets Pushing Away*

It's nonchalant. Mindless.  
Syllables shrugging me off like a snakeskin.  
I'm itchy, unpleasant.  
Clorox me. Erase me.  
I'm a gritty fish-scale drowned by ripples.  
A clover in a firry orchard.  
I may be responding to your question,  
But you won't, you don't like the answer.  
Pick a feature and draw it again.  
I am a caricature of myself.  
My flesh is pimpled with frustration  
My hair is crackling, sparking, flaming with ferocity.  
Your smoke signals retrace themselves  
Mirror, contradict,  
A double standard  
Our two flags  
Bright symbols clashing  
My porcelain smashing  
Under spiny judgement.  
But then the gory poppies open  
And your opiate soothes me,  
Chains me back to  
Your addiction.

### *13 Ways of Looking at Safeway*

- I. Smooth, lightly pocked skin  
Pocketed river-soft stone  
Heavy palmed roundness  
Slightly rough, dripping flesh  
Brightly gleaming like movie lights
  
- II. Rumble-thunder over whirring  
Fluorescent lightning  
Spray storm soaking leaf and rind  
Freckling a tiny reaching hand
  
- III. Folds  
Ruffles  
Like ladies' skirts  
Mysterious flouncing  
Verdant, flirting with  
Gleaming radishes  
Stringy proboscises  
Flat, heart-hats  
Faces of moles
  
- IV. Inviting, intoxicating perfume  
Like lilacs  
Bright, crisp, sweet  
Summer-smell  
Chubby violet bodies  
Clumping party-goers,  
Girls in middle school  
Whispering about boys
  
- V. Cascading pepper-prism  
Carroty tips of piano fingers bunching  
Purple, red, blue, gold avocado
  
- VI. Garlic sheathed in tissue  
Pungency hidden like  
Muscle behind skin
  
- VII. Bulbous oblong  
Waxy and sophisticated  
Reflection like velvet

- VIII. Gnarled knuckles,  
Sifting powder  
Wrinkled power  
Ancient witchcraft  
Deep, forbidden smells
- IX. dizzy orchid-white  
Spiral-onion dazzling
- X. Artichokes like spider jaws  
Spiky to protect their  
hearts
- XI. Dragonfruit fire,  
Searing pink  
Blisteringly tropical  
Innocent  
Chilies peeling  
Scarlet vellum  
Sunburn
- XII. Ginger village  
Connected in segments  
Ginger man  
Knotted joints  
Fibrous hairs sprouting  
Cannot run  
Bones caked with  
Ropy dirt
- XII. Plump mushroom  
Children somersaulting  
Flawless faces  
Blankly staring