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Octavio R. Gonzales
ogonzale@wellesley.edu

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FRIDAY AUGUST 13, 1999

Octavio Gonzalez

has it ever happened to you

the sudden
inexplicable recoil

from the precipice – what they call
love, sometimes,

a pattern
a tapestry.

you learn, and you learn
and you loosen your tongue

towards a stranger
whose own tastes as warm

as apple pie. you both
move on, like a still photo.

your love is eternal and frozen.

the cake is baking
you can smell it, like you can smell

the late afternoon
rain; and you think

that spring is the only time
there is. and yet – so soon

did summer come, like a thief
he steals all your belongings.

you are naked and free
at the beach.