

The Mountaineer's Daughter, and: The Second Moon Colony Will Not Fail.

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The Mountaineer's Daughter, and: The Second Moon Colony Will Not Fail

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Ecotone

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In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:

The Mountaineer's Daughter, and: The Second Moon Colony Will Not Fail

Sarah Giragosian (bio)

returned to the woods to be unmade.

Her father went for the summit;
she for the traversal across
the forest floor, and all that came with it:
the quartz-flecked trail,
the soft belly
of the stream slurping under her feet,
the grooves impressed on boulders
where glaciers screeched out
a record of their passing.

She went to find prehistoric gneiss
and ferns, still steadfast after all these years,
and all the things of the earth
that are knitted into the grammar of time.
And she went to feel her humanness annihilated,
even if for a while.

In the early owl-light, she searched for the source
of the stream; she followed its amphibian undersong,
until night fell and—
humming and waterlogged—
she found it.

Inside, she sensed her own time-
table recording itself on her bones, and hoped
that someday another wanderer would find
the curve of her spine,
her long arms and splayed fingers,
her worn gimbal joints at the hips,
and know how far she journeyed to find herself
crouching at the cutbank
with a colony of frogs,
called back by the centripetal pull of an early memory
of belly-flopping in, hindlimbs fully extended. **[End Page 64]**

The Second Moon Colony Will Not Fail,

the president promised us.

We volunteered as we always will for beauty and an exit way:

for moon, a faraway pearl

blintering at the edge of an unfathomable sea

of stars. We volunteered for bounty

or bust up or belief in progress,

or because the words jabbed us like a finger on a poster:

If you are a U. S. citizen or resident alien in good health,

sign up today to voyage to the moon!

We volunteered because we were bored

or at war

or because the earth was dying

and because we would see

earthshine for the first time

from the near side of the moon.

We volunteered because we could turn

our imaginations outward or upward,

away from ourselves;

because we could scream at each other

across a soundless atmosphere,

and then make love on land where gravity is a weak thread.

We volunteered because we were reckless and had read

Robinson Crusoe through and through

and needed a way station

for our wonder. We volunteered despite suspecting that someday,

when we have grown pale and spindly,

we will return to our lunar caves

on a dark afternoon,

slough off our space suits like skin,

and dream in our military bunks

of lush warm tones

Sarah Giragosian

SARAH GIRAGOSIAN's poems appear or are forthcoming in such journals as *Prairie Schooner*, the *Missouri Review*, *Flyway*, and *Verse Daily*, among others. A winner of the American Poetry Journal Book Prize, her first book, *Queer Fish*, is under contract with Dream Horse Press and will be published in 2016. She teaches in the Department of Writing and Critical Inquiry at the University at Albany–SUNY.

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SARAH GIRAGOSIAN

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