

APOSTASY

By Maria Waldoch

Introduce head to case on the pillow.

Once upon a week ago:

Shrieking laughter creeps through walls

(Now I hear nothing, ever, at all).

I sleep better now and

you wouldn't believe it!

Only an aging fan to disturb

without your pedestal and

plush to wonder where you were.

Dreams recall damaged things:

Broken backbones and insect wings,

your ear lined with stolen silver rings,

and in my ear a dead man sings his haunt.

You out / Time in, constructed.

I? Stuck sighing in amphibious sleep—

Truth be told I prefer a memorialized

imaginary friend to a real one who pretends.

Are you confused like him and me?

Will you ever be?

No room in this room for

a stick figure in the youniverse,

ever unmoving.

Rugburn from shoulder to shoulder,

never noticed.

You talk like you're preaching and I am silent;

God Am. And God, now would be the time to

show me how to discard all the hugs and anxious nights,

now that I've spent a year of my life

chasing a butterfly that bites.