

## MENKE KATZ

### *Old River*

Even the old river complains life is short.  
The fate of man, stars, beasts and stormlit mountains  
moans in the shoal waters of the riverside.  
The old river is a true friend of the doomed.

Cows in their old age, the grandfolk of the herd  
with much mooing and little milk, old barrens  
at five, beggars of pity, milk slaves at the  
mercy of the skinning knife, all who drag the dust

of the road on their way to the slaughterhouse  
are welcomed by the river to quench their thirst:  
Bearded goats with broken teeth, priced only for  
their raw hides, are of no use even to God.

Sheep, meek-eyed preachers who preach peace all their lives;  
castrated steers raised for beef, bulls breathing fire,  
face the butchers in white—the angels of death.

River willows offer wild grapes for their last meal.  
Calves, jolly children with bells on, unaware  
they toll their own death, leap and cheer and marvel  
as if the slaughterhouse were a wonderland.

## FRANCES OUELLETTE

### *Little Things*

I've had  
So many dreams  
That got caught  
In little things  
Like the amount of time  
From here to there  
And having the rent due  
Unaware  
Of weeks that drift  
And mounting golden air