Poem

ANIMAL STANCE:
after Rosanna Warren

Like the giraffe
as her staircase neck bends
down

by the edge
of the watering hole back legs
spread birthlike

absolutely parallel

with front
forming an isosceles
shadow under her belly,
knees turned out, shuddering
like the fluttering
nerves of a tightrope walker,

rearrview-mirror eyes scanning for danger under sleepy lashes.

So I
on crutches
thin and black
as if my torso and head were
camera and tripod rubber
soles shape of her hooves;

stand in the sea
knuckling down in the
sucking sand

triangular

in bare feet

and pick up seastones
stowing them in the pocket of my jeans.

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doi:10.5694/mja15.00206

Poem

Fresh for 24 hours

The Halloween design
made me choose it: cantaloupe pumpkins
pineapple haystacks, coconut ghosts —
an edible bouquet
Guaranteed fresh for 24 hours, the ad boasted
just right for the afternoon shift
in the delivery room at the far end
of the hall, late night nurses
who whispered, knowing how quietly labor would end
the morning shift who cried.
No rush leaving.

Flowers wouldn’t do. Fruit
a perfect gift, so ripe
juice bursting with each bite
like a promise

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doi:10.5694/mja15.00053