

# NO MATTER

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Poems in this collection appeared originally in *Conspire*, *Ducky*, *Joey & the Black Boots*, *Pyrowords*, *6ix*, and *Veer*.

## matter

s t o n e s

when the letters are stones

dragged placed abandoned

s n o w

when the letters are snow

packed curved left

y e l l o w c h a l k

when the letters are yellow chalk

up on the blackboard

g r e e n g r a s s

when the letters are green grass

woven placed in shade

b a t

when it brushes arm-hair

in the cave's deepest black

g a s h

when the glass-slivers

bubble up from the trench of blood

## **snow**

was there  
a time before  
the wind the whiteness  
the cold was  
there a summit  
was there a voice  
calling me home was  
there a time  
before the sled the  
runners the long  
hill was there  
a time when I  
wanted  
anything else

## **out**

–laws

in the cold

–casts coming

of nowhere

of the blue

of nowhere

of the past of the

–house of history

of time just

in time

just just

in time

of a long dream

just

in time to ward

off to state

of the blue

of their own mouths

–bound just

for the sun

for the air

for glory for

beulah land so

far now it's

in so very

far it's

very in

## **sweet tooth**

a dream so weighted plumbing  
mind's whole deep down  
to the wellspring then  
pulling wellspring mind  
hole in after it a  
dream so weighted no  
but not by horror light  
filling the peach room cricket-thick  
night straining the front  
door screen you and always  
you hair-frizz pinch  
of flesh closer than  
darkness than day closer  
than waking than fact

## wedding

the word to the cave

no part of the space that is not

the word            the cave after

all is the space            the word after all

others is all the space that

is the cave



## no matter

is this right then            we put  
all our ducks in a row            all  
our ducks of the under-word            all made  
of quarks            which are or are  
not matter but certainly are not  
meaning            though the ducks  
mean            as we line  
the ducks up they make  
a surface            a surface of  
water            surface and water that  
are not do not matter but  
do mean            the matter then  
cannot mean            the meaning is  
nothing            but we keep  
on lining up the ducks            beneath  
the surface of water  
is depth the more ducks the more  
depth            and dark            and  
murk            all of which is no  
matter            no matter            not matter            but is  
dark murk and deep            story  
layered upon story            stories without  
matter but with meaning            how  
is it possible to live like  
this            to make stories that  
mean            but are no matter

JOEL CHACE has published poetry and prose poetry in print and electronic magazines such as *6ix*, *Tomorrow*, *Lost and Found Times*, *Coracle*, *xStream*, *Three Candles*, *2River View*, *Joey & the Black Boots*, *Recursive Angel*, and *Veer*. He has published more than a dozen print and electronic collections, including *Translations From After* (anabasis/extant, 2004) and *drawer* (xPressed/Lulu, 2005). He is a NEH Fellow. For many years, Chace has been Poetry Editor for the experimental electronic magazine *5\_Trope*.

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