This fog over the body and mind,

this sleeping too long on the grill

of the mattress while morning pours in...

It's ten below. The sun is shining

but it's too cold to go out. The children, true,

are bundled up, drive their snowmobiles

over the ice with a swishing sound, a sigh.

In the movies we could say

What's there to awaken for? and mean

the day's too long to gather in.

The lone squirrel on the roof,

looking at the last shell of pinecone,

the annoying noise of my wrist watch,

the reminder of how little gets done.

Last night in the dark we saw

a whole city taken over

by bodies without feeling, substitutes

for ourselves. The stone faces

of strangers in motion, without motive,

in a daze was somehow comic, as if

only a single face held close

could take us in, could threaten us.

Sleep takes us where we want. The woman

who paid me no attention suddenly appears,

sits on my lap and speaks, the red

smear of her lips the blur of desire.

Whereas, awake, the vision of the child,

obscured by the treeline it weaves through,

will not tempt: our gaze into innocence

is like the wind which chills them,

drags our bodies through the repetitions

we become, and like the spark

of daylight presses down on us.

-Ira Sadoff, “Invasion of the Body Snatchers”, Ploughshares, Vol. 6, No. 2 (1980), pp. 56-57