

# Perseveration

by Nicole Kubilus

*Though I may stand still  
My thoughts are black and white  
Swirling and separating like oil and water  
Rather than mixing into gray*

*They are the anxiously  
Ticking hand of the clock  
Counting down the seconds  
Until it resets itself in the time loop*

*Yet also the minute hand  
With broken gears  
Jolting and twitching to move forward  
Yet stuck at the same number*

*My thoughts are the metal padlock  
That a person constantly turns  
Eventually smashing it against the wall  
Because he forgot the code*

*I am torn apart  
Between reality and catastrophe  
Rendering me motion sick  
Unable to swim out of the whirlpool*

*What is up and down?  
What is the truth, a compulsion, a phobia?  
What is righteous anger  
And "letting things go?"*

*What does it mean to have  
Flexible thinking  
When spiraling doesn't have  
Any sharp corners?*

*Why do people think  
That I'm repeating myself  
When I'm drilling deeper  
To the root of the problem*

*Yet all I do  
Is bury myself in a deeper hole  
Without a ladder to climb out  
On my own*

*So all I can do is move forward  
Even though I stay in one spot  
Repeat myself  
As if my thoughts are my chisel*

*As much as I hate these thoughts  
That keep me in a straight jacket of  
Anxiety, anger, depression, and shame  
At least they are predictable*

*At least  
There is order  
Within the chaos of  
My disordered thinking*