

MITCHELL WELCH

*Blue-ringed Octopus*

She wore a mood ring

Stuck on the colour of ruination,

    The colour of copper sulfate crystals

    I loved.

The sky was a CMYK halftone matrix.

    Its key was black.

I could trace a welling pool to a broken pipe

And find her malachite ring

    Around its neck.    She wore hypercolor

T-shirts that recast themselves

    From violet wine

To empty-cartridge pink in her bodily heat.

But then the fade

    Held fast,

    And we could no longer afford to blush.

There were brief moments then.

    Everything moved like a parrotfish

Towards the end, the rusted pipe,

    A heat-sensitive film

    Troubled by the black swell.

We had nothing but the colour of bare skin

And blue patina spackle.    Cyanide.