University of New Orleans

ScholarWorks@UNO

Undergraduate Prizes and Awards

Undergraduate Showcase

5-1-2015

"Leech," "Blue Whale" and "Elephant" (poems)

Benjamin Aleshire
University of New Orleans

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.uno.edu/awards

Award Name: Ryan Chighizola Prize

Leech

Benjamin Aleshire

Ryan Chighizola Prize Winner

Call me a parasite, sure —
    I can't change the body
I was born into.
    We all must eat, somehow, no?
Me, I have learned to wait —
    You'll come running to me
when you need relief
    from something you don't understand,
when even your blood
    betrays you.

for James

Blue Whale

Benjamin Aleshire

Ryan Chighizola Prize Winner

A relic of an older world,
    they call me, but
I have out-lived ice-ages
    & I will out-live you.
Even when my body drifts
    to the ocean floor,
I become a garden
    glowing in the darkness.
I am so large
    that I have no concept
of fear, of danger:
    I almost envy you
your human folly, where
    everything you do is sweetened
    by risk.

for Dierdre

Elephant

Benjamin Aleshire

Ryan Chighizola Prize Winner

If the heart is a building —
   (with its chambers & atriums)
my mother my architect built for me
   a palace.
But there are too many rooms
   & no one inside them dancing
   so many mirrors & undisturbed pools.

A beautiful thief is coming soon
   to plunder me   I know it
(I can feel her even now scaling up my walls,
   leaving a map of her bare prints
   through the rows of my hushed gardens)

   for Isabella