

Fall 2011

On how we started measuring the years in illness

Maggie Glover

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Recommended Citation

Glover, Maggie (2011) "On how we started measuring the years in illness," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 75 , Article 14.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss75/14>

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ON HOW WE STARTED MEASURING THE YEARS
IN ILLNESSES

My father came back to life so we kept moving.

Back to Pittsburgh, on to West Virginia,

I packed my heart pills and your methadone

and we were off. I loved with a grape gum heart

beneath the drop ceiling, waited

all day for your cowboy boots to dust up

the drive so we could get sick and sleep.

We saw each other through mimosa eyes

until our spirit fled like a thunderstorm,

leaving the wet shape of us on the back porch.

My mother called 17 times before I answered,

each ring like a bird hitting the window—

the sound of an animal, almost home.