

# Yalobusha Review

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## Reactor

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Tadros: Reactor

***Yellowwood Poetry Contest Prize Winner***

*Contest Judge: Sandra Beasley*

***Billie R. Tadros***

***REACTOR***

1.

For the anniversary of the breaking we built a fall-out shelter  
in the backyard—  
concrete, lead, dry earth packed from the garden section of  
the hardware store.  
Cut down the trees (radiation rains from branches) and left

2.

our clothes outside the blast hatch to minimize the hot  
introduced, rubbed  
our bodies together below ground: a new shape for memory.  
And planted

3.

a single mustard plant in a patch of earth under the heat  
lamp, nurtured

4.

it like anxiety, always just a little more water than it thirsted,  
slowly depleting  
our steel thermos provisions.

5.

What happened was more like an earthquake was more like a  
shaking  
up, but you grew up just outside Three Mile Island where  
they said they tasted metal  
when the nuclear reactor malfunctioned, so you shivered  
when you saw the plumes

6.

feathering from the donut factory on our drive out of town for  
morning coffee

7.

before our burial, a living  
time capsule: This is what we did to feel  
safe.