

REPRIEVE

Lyn Lifshin

for the moment, my
 cat, who turned her head
 at chunks of just
 cut beef, now is nuzzling
 nearly empty cat food
 tins, purrs thru the
 night. Limp as rags,
 for a week under the
 bed, now she claws the
 rug in the sun. I say
 nothing, just listen
 as I do to her crunching
 food, lapping water
 at 2 A.M. In stillness
 the sound comforts
 like bells or words in
 Spanish or French
 I don't understand. Her
 chewing, like pearls
 or amber warming to
 skin, soothes though it
 is as untranslatable
 to me as the nuances
 under chatter in
 the streets of Montreal
 or Paris. Still, for
 the moment, like music
 or velvet, her paws on my
 eyelid are a reprieve,
 like June, or roses
 or lilacs in early light
 before anything scorches,
 goes limp or loses
 its rouge, while morning
 glories are a necklace
 of amethyst, exotic as
gracia, si bon merci