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Pale Moon

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Red Cedar Review, Volume 43, 2008, pp. 33-34 (Article)

Published by Michigan State University Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/rcr.0.0011>

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When I was a child
the moon appeared only
in the night, in storybooks,
through a window and surrounded
by thick, inky black;
it was full, ripe,
and radiant in October,
setting the cornfields ablaze,
flaming seas of rippling, golden ribbon.

I would gaze at the moon's
scarred, pale expression
and wonder if its face
was ever smooth
like an unchipped china saucer
first brought down from
a high cupboard shelf.

I would squint through the telescope
on warm summer nights
for a glimpse
of the astronauts' craft buzzing
around the moon's head;
if the moon had arms
and quick hands,
it could swat
at the shiny, irksome fly.

I cannot recall when
I first noticed the moon
on an early morning,
and even now I'm distracted
by its thin, diaphanous
bit of fabric clinging
to pallid, blue skin
and slipping,
as the sun nears,
from the shoulders of the sky
to the floor of the horizon.