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## Spinsters, Fully Furnished

Joe Milazzo

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## MALAISE

Lauren Smart

Balanced between cold and then hot  
Is some unknown substance  
That claims it's own spot.

Rarely declaring, complaining, or swearing  
Muttering mumblings while  
I go on caring.

It devours my joy, tearing  
My angers in half  
As if in defense of a word or a riddle.

It nearly moves forward  
Then takes a step back  
Like a friend who comes over  
And then takes a nap.

I mean nothing rude  
But perhaps a change of tune  
Or be gone little demon.

I won't miss one bit  
Your lukewarm encouragement  
But when passion again expires my time  
I'll call you dear friend, I'll drop you a line.

## SPINSTERS, FULLY FURNISHED

Joe Milazzo

I lent her a cigarette. Actually, I gave it to her.  
She didn't know it, but I was asking her to go away.  
Shit, hold on; had I offered her comfort instead?  
All I wanted was for it to be clear that she was no  
comfort to me, that she filled me with impatience  
that I was I just waiting for her sympathies to  
expire behind a thin gray screen of exhaling. Then  
I would be free to vanish into the mingling black  
and white of the reception... the brown diffractions  
swimming in a whiskey double. So she fished in her  
purse for a lighter. And her hand found mine on  
the railing. "Now, my grandmother," she said.



**PLAY THAT GUITAR** Elizabeth Fiechtner