

## *Artemis in New Mexico*

Her dreams are in rich shades of browns, fragrant  
just before a thaw. Spring and a scattering of  
rain stirs the cinnamon dust. Cloudy nights  
hang low and velvet black except for a haze of  
small lights in the colorless north,  
for she lives in the desert alone.

Remote, she is an island in the wind.  
The eddies caress her breasts perfect, form  
her arms strong, her thighs quick with endurance.  
She craves the elk simply for competition.  
And holds the dove's egg with envy.

On days she goes into town, she buys cinnamon.  
She brings this season home; her reverie of  
summer-hot jungles, the far away places where  
this spice is grown—a tree's skin peeled and ground;  
tasted pure—a luscious sting, a burn on her tongue.

She knows autumn by frost in the dust;  
cinnamon earth and sugar snow melting  
to a deeper brown-sugar mud she sees  
freezing through her keen window eyes toward  
winter, knowing the deer will come here  
for nourishment.

Then she will prepare a harvest of desire.  
She will cook with it, add dried berries and  
eat them all.

—*Carolyn Tourney Florek*

## *What I Keep Telling Myself*

You should be painting layers of colors,  
Sensing the paint, mixing a myriad  
Of pigments brushed and fingered  
on to a rough hewn canvas.

You should be living paint.

Breathing in emollient images  
Of sky and earth, light and shadow—  
Abundant and vibrant textures,  
Sloshed and dripped  
as if you know nothing.

Is this freedom? This surrender to paint?  
Is freedom a gracious bow to art?  
Or a passionate stripping away of economy?

Throw open the door and let the cold air rush in;  
Lightening spikes  
and explosions of thunder,

The stinging rain—hail!  
Think nothing of roaches taking cover in your home;  
Begging dogs rolling mud on your rug.  
Let them all in and get out!

You! Get out!

And before you leave,  
Paint your body naked with primary colors;  
Then go search this voracious world

And write it all down with amazement.

—*Carolyn Tourney Florek*