

Joanne Detore-Nakamura

Escape Artist

I recline on the white, wicker sofa
with the green and white striped cushion
facing the lake and the highway.
The lake is calm, gentle ripples
fold into each other, easing toward the shore.

Just above the bank is the highway.
The roar of cars drown out
the twittering song of a finch
in my leafless Chinese tallow tree.
There is a line of cars like ants
streaming past one by one,
furious to reassemble
a disturbed mound.

This is my quiet solitude—
writing in my journal with a fountain
pen, disturbed by the honking of horns
and the drone of 18-wheelers.

Who am I to suppose that I can escape
from my child's cries, the ding
of dirty dishes, the bark
of a tiny persistent dog, and
the grumbling of a husband

who thinks the house is never
clean enough.

I have no room of my own
or a minute to myself.
There is my 500 pounds –
the food, the diapers,
the dry-cleaning of men's suits,
the mortgage– there, there
his dirty underwear hangs halfway off
the hamper, dingy yellow with
a stretched out waistband,
fodder for the trash heap months ago.
There is no poetry in that.