Fastbreak by Edward Hirsch

and filling the lanes in tandem, moving
together as brothers passing the ball

between them without a dribble, without
a single bounce hitting the hardwood

until the guard finally lunges out
and commits to the wrong man

while the power-forward explodes past them
in a fury, taking the ball into the air

by himself now and laying it gently
against the glass for a lay-up,

but losing his balance in the process,
inexplicably falling, hitting the floor

with a wild, headlong motion
for the game he loved like a country

and swiveling back to see an orange blur
floating perfectly though the net.

A hook shot kisses the rim and
hangs there, helplessly, but doesn't drop,

and for once our gangly starting center
boxes out his man and times his jump

perfectly, gathering the orange leather
from the air like a cherished possession

and spinning around to throw a strike
to the outlet who is already shoveling

an underhand pass toward the other guard
scissoring past a flat-footed defender

who looks stunned and nailed to the floor
in the wrong direction, trying to catch sight

of a high, gliding dribble and a man
letting the play develop in front of him

in slow motion, almost exactly
like a coach's drawing on the blackboard,

both forwards racing down the court
the way that forwards should, fanning out

My Room by Joe Powning

My room
My haven
My block of peace
In a hectic world

My room
My prison
The subject of many
“Go to Yours”

My room
My cubicle of terror
zone of nightmares
shelter of my angst

My room
My haven
My organized chaos
My ongoing rationalization
My responsibility
My harbor of fantasies
My prison
My terror
My block of peace
in a hectic world

My room
My own personal disaster area
Of piled clothing and blaring music-
A comfortable chaos

My room
My harbor of fantasies
“Gee whiz, Ace, what kinda room is this?”

asked Ace’s detective’s sidekick
“I don’t know,” Ace replied, “but I like it.”

My room
My ongoing rationalization
Joe’s brain: Joe’s room is messy
Joe: What’s new?

My room
My responsibility
The subject of many
“Go Clean Yours”

Remembrance of a Friend
By Benjamin F. Williams

You, my dog Buster,
who will be buried in the field
along with your bed that lived
under the piano,
so in the springtime
dandelions will grow
over your grave.

My sight is blurred by tears
as we walk to the field.
I wish you were beside me,
your paws adding the ground,
your pink tongue tasting the air.

Your life was long.
You, who babysat me
when I was nine months old,
watching me bounce
in my Johnny-jump-up,
only your eyes moving
as you pretended not to notice
when I landed on your snout.

You, who Dad lifted
and plopped on the sled
so you could slide down
the driveway with me,
my hands burrowed
in black fur,
your ears drawn back
by the icy wind.

