

HANNAH THOMASSEN

PHONE CALL FROM MY SCHIZOPHRENIC SON

*For EARTH which is an intelligence hath a voice
and a propensity to speak in all her parts.*

Christopher Smart

I dreamed Dad was hugging me, he said.
It was so great, Mom. There were tears
in the back of my face.

I met a lady, he said. She wants to be best friends.
But I'm gonna ask her some questions.
I don't want no suicidals. She was wearing Levi Strauss.
But I need friends who are qualified. No suicides.

I smoke too much, he said.
This board and care sucks. No one worries about my health.

Resperol, he said. Trazodone, Cogentin, Geodon.
They took away my Ambien.

Oh, I said, nodding my head.
Love, we said; we said goodbye.

Outside, from the sky, rain fell
upon the ground where juncos fed.
It could have been the sun and mourning doves.
It was Joe. It was dark-eyed juncos in the rain.

JAMES H. COFFMAN

MAIN EVENT

"She's schizophrenic,"
Said Dr. Hart,
Like someone satisfied
Because he'd figured it out.

"Not my daughter,"
I said to myself.
"She's just got tendencies,
"That's all," I said.

I went home mad,
Swinging my denial
Like a club
To protect her.

But Lady Truth proved gentle,
Sitting by my side
For all the nights I needed
"Til I was ready—

After soaking up
All the hurt I could—
For the main event—
A no-holds-barred
Twenty year talk
With God.