

COLOR THEORIES

Julia Alter

Theory of Blue

Cobalt dream: cash glass.
Anyone will buy a thing,
put it down to rest.

My museum home,
I'm jealous of the hurt one—
silence in my bones.

Bruises were buttons
for her, she pushed them harder
than I thought she could.

Let me sail away
on the beach by Lion's Head,
that was Africa.

For me, the city
only had one name, a boy's,
and never again.

Sea Point, didn't know
I'd hold it like a kitten
with the meanest claws.

Cold and ancient light,
so under-dressed in winter.
It was summer there.

That skirt, torn before,
ripped again in harmony.
Kissed, an accident.

Wag's Revue
Theory of Green

**Something to touch on,
making lists of baby names.
Now he wants a garden.**

**Today, true autumn.
Hard enough to get in touch—
hard enough to touch.**

**Socks the same color,
to be lost in a forest
to be caught, a fish**

**landed in a purse.
Scream, squirm and test the water.
Slime, gills, no money.**

**I wake up a pea-
cock, underneath this heavy
memory of quills.**

Wag's Revue
Theory of Red

**Full of teeth, fighting
dogs tear up floors. Bone shatters
precise as a clock.**

**Once in Mexico,
a dog in dust with three legs.
I thought: *take him home.***

**I've learned the ugly
things need saving least, beauty
always more broken.**



**Easy denial,
easily his excuse. He
was home already,**

**facing her, who had
found lipstick on a wine glass
in the dishwasher.**

**Looking back, no hurt.
That's why it all kept breaking.
An earthquake, whispered.**

Wag's Revue
Theory of Yellow

**Drew a line today,
suddenly butterflies float
from the black ceiling.**

**Vast as memory
or an elephant's tiptoe,
swinging its tail—*swish*.**

**These are desert days:
sun rock hard when it rises,
curling shadow nights.**

**I make a fish from
a lemon. There are trees for
this, without water.**

**What could be brighter?
I almost see a date palm.
Miracle, mirage.**