

JASON BREDLE

Retina Heart

The village burned an effigy
of a snowman to mark the end
of winter—a gray, annual affair noted
for its remarkable scowls
and dismal sense of order.
There were good cakes.
Juan got a red stain on his pants
that to this day
he's never figured out.
You couldn't put a cap
on my melancholy.
You could put a cape on it
I guess. We bought carrots
and when Juan learned
eating them was a traditional gesture
of goodwill, he grabbed them
and took huge bites
out of all of them.
Before we separated, he asked
if I was sure I knew
what I was doing. I said yes
but had no idea what he meant.
I was trying to make a retina
out of my heart.
After that, I washed my eyes
with baby shampoo. I couldn't deal
with any more tears.