

Brussels, 2:12 a. m.

Time peels from the clock,
falls like wafers into the mediocrity
that swells in a subconscious concoction of *self*.
My palate finds escape in Brussels
at 2:12 a.m., Saturday morning.

I descend into my twenties,
sit on street corners and watch
as virgin girls shop—their energetic dispositions
quickly dissolving into laughter
so unexpectedly, and yet so *naturally*.

The last Brussels' linger fades
from a plateau of cough syrup and tepid tea
as my crumbly existence is challenged
by the only friend I have past two a.m.—
a multicolored, muted plea to
be more passionate.

—Michael Pracht