

2003

Sun Spots

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Recommended Citation

Nichols, Laura. "Sun Spots." *The Iowa Review* 33.1 (2003): 141-141. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.S708>

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LAURA NICHOLS

Sun Spots

A yellow snake senses heat
and sheds skin in a rock crevice.

Wake in pooled heat
shaking from a dream that fits like a wasp's nest.
Fine snakeskin in the bed sheets.

Lightning inflames an onion skin sky.
A diamond backed rattle snake scissors through sand
like a razor separating cocaine.

So why this inward push
to the adder
the kitchen stove's rings
early evening thunder?

At four o'clock in the afternoon
the sun hits the water
like a pheasant shot through the wing.
It makes no difference:
 letting a feather drop to the ground
 kicking a shell back into the waves
 pushing turquoise back to the grave.

In this sinking hour
touch kelp shed skin
passing through close coral
in and out of sun spots.