

MATT SUMPTER

Super Mario in a Retirement Home

The others talk, in the afternoons, of falling—
through dreams and dosages,
into the LA-Z-Boys
of their spines,
down hallways opening like one long throat.

My roommate lifts his leg
and drops it, lifts and drops.
*The end'll be like that, he says, without the bed
to catch you.*

I tell them
falling brought me here.
The scant platforms fell away, and I dropped
into my world's tessellation, small and far

from god. I tell them I was a doctor once,
and know the fire has left their fingertips.

*Look outside, I say, the toothless flowers
waggle their arms for you.*

*Their roots
do not swallow them. Today, I push
my nose deep behind their lips
like a lion tamer.*

*Tomorrow, I place my ear
to a drain pipe and commiserate*

*with water. Like turtles, we can skulk
the earth long after our shells have gone.*

But when they die, the falling stops.
I can only dive into the deepest pond
wearing a belt of wrenches—
where no clock
or song can follow.
There, I'll meet the algae, coalesce with rocks

in their incredible dimensions. I'll rest,
knowing I can finally sink no deeper.