Fastbreak by Edward Hirsch

and filling the lanes in tandem, moving  
together as brothers passing the ball  
  
between them without a dribble, without  
a single bounce hitting the hardwood  
  
until the guard finally lunges out  
and commits to the wrong man  
  
while the power-forward explodes past them  
in a fury, taking the ball into the air

by himself now and laying it gently  
against the glass for a lay-up,  
  
but losing his balance in the process,  
inexplicably falling, hitting the floor  
  
with a wild, headlong motion  
for the game he loved like a country  
  
and swiveling back to see an orange blur  
floating perfectly though the net.

A hook shot kisses the rim and  
hangs there, helplessly, but doesn't drop,  
  
and for once our gangly starting center  
boxes out his man and times his jump  
  
perfectly, gathering the orange leather  
from the air like a cherished possession  
  
and spinning around to throw a strike  
to the outlet who is already shoveling  
  
an underhand pass toward the other guard  
scissoring past a flat-footed defender  
  
who looks stunned and nailed to the floor  
in the wrong direction, trying to catch sight  
  
of a high, gliding dribble and a man  
letting the play develop in front of him  
  
in slow motion, almost exactly  
like a coach's drawing on the blackboard,  
  
both forwards racing down the court  
the way that forwards should, fanning out  
  
My Room by Joe Powning

My room  
My haven  
My block of peace  
In a hectic world

My room  
My prison  
The subject of many  
“Go to Yours”

My room  
My cubicle of terror  
zone of nightmares  
shelter of my angst

My room  
My haven  
My organized chaos  
My ongoing rationalization  
My responsibility  
My harbor of fantasies  
My prison  
My terror  
My block of peace  
in a hectic world

My room  
My own personal disaster area  
Of piled clothing and blaring music-  
A comfortable chaos

My room  
My harbor of fantasies  
“Gee whiz, Ace, what kinda room is this?”

asked Ace’s detective’s sidekick  
“I don’t know,” Ace replied, “but I like it.”

My room  
My ongoing rationalization  
Joe’s brain: Joe’s room is messy  
Joe: What’s new?

My room  
My responsibility  
The subject of many  
“Go Clean Yours”

Remembrance of a Friend  
By Benjamin F. Williams

You, my dog Buster,  
who will be buried in the field  
along with your bed that lived  
under the piano,  
so in the springtime  
dandelions will grow  
over your grave.

My sight is blurred by tears  
as we walk to the field.  
I wish you were beside me,  
your paws adding the ground,  
your pink tongue tasting the air.

Your life was long.  
You, who babysat me  
when I was nine months old,  
watching me bounce  
in my Johnny-jump-up,  
only your eyes moving  
as you pretended not to notice  
when I landed on your snout.

You, who Dad lifted  
and plopped on the sled  
so you could slide down  
the driveway with me,  
my hands burrowed  
in black fur,  
your ears drawn back  
by the icy wind.

