

from Juked #5, Spring 2008

JENNIFER SHEPARD

---

AFTER A DEATH

A telephone wrenched from the wall  
is crouched in the middle of the floor  
its roots still intact, but frayed at the ends.

It vibrates when it rings.  
Someone from the milky underground  
is calling with loam in his mouth:

death has herded him off to the forest,  
endlessly pulling him up by the arms  
and draping his body over the branches.

Trees everywhere are tearing through  
the moon with astronomical speed.  
Refugee stars float in the earth's perimeters —

how it is when too many are breathing  
into the phone, into the rooms  
of those that call for them in dreams.