

BETH BACHMANN

psyops

We can be so close to another body without
knowing it. Lush, we say of the field the color
of the dead, so green only the bindweed owns
it: strangle the light with black plastic or feed
the pigs pumpkin, the white flowers are slow
poison and chloroform's a sad love philter. The snow
is tired of fearing where to lie down. Bring me
a dog I can punish into a pleasing retriever.
The reader is not unlike the killer: you could be
anyone. Beauty is futile.

humiliation

Where are the women in this war? The long limbs of the trees stripped
are the limbs of the trees. You can't have a war

without women. Where do you think all that blood comes from?
The trees in war are worse than the horses. You can kill a horse.

A horse can kill you. Most men have little use for metaphor.
Door go out. All fall down. Baby. Pray

nobody dare says the word. So many trees. The women are skinny
and there are more of you

than stars in the warfield, than shrapnel. Pigs?
I haven't seen pigs for months.

BETH BACHMANN is a 2016 Guggenheim Fellow in poetry and the author of two books from the Pitt Poetry Series: *Temper*, winner of the AWP Donald Hall Prize and Kate Tufts Discovery Award, and *Do Not Rise*, winner of the Poetry Society of America's Alice Fay di Castagnola Award.