

Calling in the Tab
By Gregory JM Kasunich

It's been said, that Macaques bond through grooming
 Picking all manner
 of creature
 and critter (lice and ticks)
 Sucking (dead skin and dirt)
from the matted and unreachable parts
 of another's hair

And this kindness is repaid,
whether it be weeks or months (almost down to the minute)
 a mental ledger balanced
 a social contract fulfilled

It has also been said that we bonded through grooming.

 Untangling the delicate threads
 (of your nameless burdens)
 Plucking the toothy parasites
 (lodged in your dappled skin)

 Tracing the phenology of your scalp, I read your future, all hushed and glorious

And yet

 it's been weeks or months

No, perhaps years-

 the anguish of my ledger remains open

 The contract precariously near to breaching

The dead skin turned over to dust

If only you could hear me calling in some vociferous caterwaul

Calling in the once wild night

 Calling for you