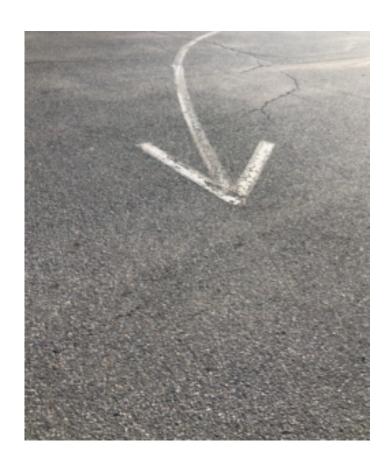
## New Poetry by Matthew Hummer: "Amortization"



JUST SAY IT / image by Amalie Flynn

## **AMORTIZATION**

Carl showed me the chart years ago, when we first thought to buy a house. But we wouldn't write a note saying she'd go back to work the same hours after birth. The underwriter, in fluorescent office by the two lane road between golf course and condo, wanted a winkwink. "Just say it." A lie worth a sixty thousand dollar house, brick row home with sagging

window frames and tilted doors. A loan unto death. Camus, I think, pointed that out. Mort, en français.

Dianoia: How you've led me astray. Res publica. Fasces. Words and phrases we use without knowing the root. Character in the play. "History. History!" Dag Nasty said at the end of a song: Now that it's gone just admit it to yourself. Now that it's gone just admit it to yourself. Drum rapid as the rumble of a gasoline engine—leaded. Army green paint. Nova; V-eight. From stop to start, shifting up from floor to top. Another typical youth...

Thirty years to pay it off. The life of the loan, more than two dog lives. Not the lifetime quarantee of a washing machine—the expected lifetime of the appliance. Five vears? Seven? Fifteen before nineteen eighty. The green fridge next to the coffee pot kept milk for decades. Vietnam to Iraq, outlasting the man smoking cigarettes on the concrete patio, feeding peanuts to squirrels and telling a child about the Battle

of the Bulge, the tank driver who fell back in headless, the German soldiers who "tried to get away in the snow," the aristocrat's sword the post office stole from the box he sent home.

The guarantee spans the projected lifespan. Lottery ticket, Camels, Dominoes, V.A., Life insurance. Actuarial predictions with cosign charts—bodies in the morgue. Dead reckoning. Except the Black swan, clot-shot. Dead cat bounce. Bank-breaker. Mid-life degeneration. A rogue wave rises and swallows the bobbing tanker.