

**New Poetry from Marc Tretin:  
“Justin Alter, Slightly  
Drunk, Addresses Maya, Who Is  
In Egypt” and “Maya Ricci  
Alter After Excavating A  
Pyramid South Of Zairo”**



HOT WIRES SCALD / image by Amalie Flynn

**JUSTIN ALTER, SLIGHTLY DRUNK, ADDRESSES MAYA, WHO IS IN EGYPT**

Now as I am hungover and queasy  
stumping about the tilting house  
and sappy as my face is green,  
Maya, your sculpture of Qetesh,  
that goddess of sex and ecstasy,  
whose torso of clear pink plastic  
has a heart made of puzzle pieces  
dangling from wires that run to an  
automated external defibrillator  
normally used to shock  
a rapid cardiac rhythm  
back to normal, stares at me with eyes  
filled with both desire and despair.  
Though feeling embarrassed  
I touch the pink nub you meant  
to be her clit and a soft whirr starts, then  
puzzle pieces spin so fast they tear, and scatter  
and the bare hot wires scald  
the insides of her perfect breasts.  
I pull the plug, but the smell of burnt plastic  
fills our bedroom despite the open windows.  
Why do you have to be gone so long?

## **MAYA RICCI ALTER EXCAVATING A PYRAMID SOUTH OF CAIRO**

As I stooped beneath the  
standing sun within the  
meter-by-meter carefully  
measured order of this  
archeological dig and  
brushed pottery shards  
and papyrus crumbs through  
a sieve to sift out the sand,  
the heat's strong hands  
touched me like a half-  
wanted lover, whose warmth

is too familiar with my  
body to refuse and that's  
why when Jamaal, the site  
boss said, "You look  
overheated.

Cool off in my trailer."

"Yes," I said, knowing I  
wanted to betray Justin  
but not knowing why, so  
after we had sex and while  
I was thinking how can I  
use this experience,  
I saw Jamaal shave with  
a straight edge then I saw  
the dead-on right image for the God Set,  
a cave-sized skull made of razor blades,  
entered by stepping  
over teeth made of sharp knives  
into total darkness  
except for a weak light  
piercing this skull  
through one of its eyes  
and in that eye is a web  
and tangled in its threads  
are Zipporah and Justin.  
Their faces, formless rags.  
Their bodies sucked out hulks.