

Matthew Van Praagh

Just One More

after Maya Marshall

is an empty phrase,
is a lie she tells herself.

Alcohol is a safe space,
is a numbing agent.

is an escape, is a light shining
at the end of the proverbial tunnel.

Drinking is a pastime,
is a friendly bonding experience.

is a solution, is an excuse
for her recent outbursts.

A body is a castle,
molded by bricks of skin

shaped by stones of blood.
Alcohol is a wagon of boulders.

An addiction is a curse.
An addiction is curable.

Their retorts are wrong,
She knows she can recover.

A lie is a fleeting thought,
a patch on a crumbling dam.

A lie is a knot,
Two lies is a bunny knot.

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More lies is a haystack of nots,
not a remedy, not an excuse.

Tolerance is a myth,
is a misteaching, is a mistake.

Tequila is a kaleidoscope
is a friendly neighbor, is a foul beast.

A bar is a bank,
A beer is an investment.

The drinker is a stock.
Her success is a stock market crash.

The floor is a sanctuary,
is an aching cranium, is a soft oasis.

A stretcher is a damned electric chair.
The paramedics are her executioners.

A heartbeat is a gamble,
is a blaring timebomb, louder with each tick.

A consciousness is a fleeting thought,
the tequila is a final memory.

A rehab center is a lost cause,
a businessman's hammer, a free thinker's coffin.

A drunk woman is a statistic,
an expectancy, an accounted-for loss.

An alcoholic woman is an anomaly,
is a twister to her family, is a tsunami to herself.

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is not what she is,
She is curable, she is willing, she is a magnet of glory.

A gravestone is an inevitability.
A car accident is an inevitability.

A brain is a store-bought egg,
its yolk yellowing the grayed pavement.

A gravestone is an inevitability,
will happen, is happening, has happened.

A woman was an example,
was a disease gone awry, was a faultless bystander.

A child is an opportunity,
A drinking age is an antagonistic force.

A teenager is a warrior with a drawn sword that
A cloud of agony melts.

A teenager is a hollow vessel,
A cycle is repeated.