

# Drinking Calamine

*by* Carl Santoro

Shit, I thought it was a Beck's.

The bites have been swabbed.  
Cottenballs all pink.

A frenzied air chase ended the career of  
a tiny moth.  
Thought it was a biter. Sorry.

Hallucinating every thought.  
Scratching must be like what crack is.

Itch-serum speeding under  
surface skin. 3 new ones in under a minute.  
Bubbling into volcanic terrors.  
My nails, filled with wet lotion and blood-  
too much scratching.

This used to be a war with  
poison ivy...  
at camp...  
every summer.

Calamine's hypnotic scent  
too lovely to  
be a weapon.

I release the pink lava.  
It oozes onto yet another  
cotton ball.

Bandit at 3:00!

With bottle in hand  
I swing to deflect.

The Beck's falls.  
The lotion spills.  
The bite wins.

I can hear the moth laughing.

