

My Father's 3rd Winter in Buchenwald

John Guzowski

He remembered the frozen bodies.

Some looked like they had been
cemented in the ice, heads and hands
and knees above the ice line,
stomachs and feet below.

The prisoners who died this way
must have been trying to raise
themselves out of the freezing water,
but the water froze too quickly.

Some of the stripped coats and pants
had been peeled from the bodies.
Their legs were black with frostbite,
their pricks shriveled to the size of acorns.
Summers are hard. Winters are harder.

John Guzowski's writing appears in *Rattle*, *North American Review*, and other journals. *Echoes of Tattered Tongues*, his memoir about his parents' experiences as slave laborers in Nazi Germany, won the Benjamin Franklin Poetry Award and the Eric Hoffer/Montaigne Award. He is the author of the Hank and Marvin mysteries and a columnist for the *Dziennik Zwiazkowy*.