Two Poems

Aubrey Ryan

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Abstract
Two poems, including "Sam and Lulu at the Very End of the World" and "Furrow and Plow."

Keywords
snowday, crop, bets, gravel, pin
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by Aubrey Ryan

Sam and Lulu at the Very End of the World

They talk in lowered voices about ash. Lulu says it falls
like lashes on her face; she comes in from the yard all streaked
with grey. Sam jokes: snowday. Every morning he trips
from their bed and peeks out the curtain and fakes a gasp: O Lu-

lu-lu—I’ll bet you a snowday. At the end of the world, every bet
is a good one. Lulu’s hair in the morning is a lazy, blow-dried
tiger. She used to run her hair down Sam’s belly, and his cock
would bob and bob. She’d lay down her body. She’d lay

between his legs, and he’d take her hair in his fist and spread it
all across his chest and neck and mouth. He thought it was a crop
of something gathered from the ground, and something threshed. At the end of the world, the sky is a pot of dishwater. The sun is so tired. Sam dares Lulu to blow the sun out—just the breeze from her whistle would do it. He nuzzles her neck and says: you could whistle down the sun, O Baby Lu. They go out for a Sunday Morning Walk. In the dark, the ash looks blue-jean blue; they wade up to their thighs. Sam lists Lulu's face to her: one little freckled nose. One curly eyebrow hair, twanging in the wind. Two cheeks with gold beneath. He says: your eyes are blue-jean blue. She says: O Sam. If I had fire, I'd light myself up.

* * *

Furrow and Plow

She likes that he watches her in class, then follows her home down the farm road and all the way outside of town. He acts like he's got the bit in his mouth and she likes that too. She surprises herself by screaming as he pushes her down, surprises herself and stops. Birds settle back on their posts; he lifts her skirt by the side of the road. There is gravel between her back and the ground, and later she will find tiny bruises like seeds where rock fixed to skin and she didn't feel it, was thinking of changing into jeans, of her mother in the fields and how the plow cuts through dirt. On her way home it's dark. The neighbor woman on her porch watches under the light, moths in a reckless halo above her head. She sees the girl's legs, bare against black fields, shakes her head no, no and makes a chirp with her tongue. She wants to tell the girl to comb her hair and stand up straight. It's so much nicer to look pretty—stop walking like something's pinning you down, plowing you under.
Aubrey Ryan holds an MFA from Northern Michigan University where she served as an editor for Passages North Journal. Her work has appeared most recently in DIAGRAM, Pebble Lake Review, and The Dirty Napkin. She lives in Iowa.