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Abstract

The 2012 Both Poetry Prize Runner-Up, as selected by Linda Gregg.

Keywords

fall, autumn, drive, remember



April 27, 2012

Bearing October

Sarah Marcus

2012 Booth Poetry Prize Runner-Up, as selected by Linda Gregg

The foliage fades to browns and grays the further we drive on the Pennsylvania Turnpike. The closer to Cleveland, the quieter. Dying animals on the roadside, asphalt stained with blood and leftovers.

I tell you how he pushed me down the stairs. How he threatened to hurt my sister. It could have been a miscarriage, but who can really say. I was thirteen and he was eighteen. A thin sheet of metal, sliding, caught on the back tire. You say this would never have happened in your house.

I tell you they tried prayer circles, rehabilitations, barren deserts—all dead stones. The weather always moves fast in the mountains. Semi-trucks, unaffected, barrel past us. The rain falls so hard I can't hear. The kind of quiet found when you are pinned face down in the carpet. A childhood memory: his voice saying, your pussy smells so good.

The rain stops. You say it's too hard to hear these stories. You ask *how do you think it makes me feel*. I want to say that there are places I have to go, and you have to follow me. I notice the smell of firewood burning and the sun beginning to set. And through all this orange light, every version of the color red, we betray ourselves for miles.

Sarah Marcus is currently pursuing her MFA in poetry at George Mason University, where she is also an English faculty member, a staff blogger and reader for *So to Speak: A Feminist Journal of Language & Art*, and a staff member at *Phoebe*. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Spork*, *Cimarron Review*, *Slipstream*, *Tidal Basin Review*, and *Cold Mountain Review*, among others. She is originally from Cleveland, Ohio.

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