



Booth

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Volume 4 | Issue 8

Article 3

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8-17-2012

## Manners

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### Recommended Citation

Murray, Victoria Bosch (2012) "Manners," *Booth*: Vol. 4 : Iss. 8 , Article 3.

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## Manners

### Abstract

They found him dead in a field two blocks from home. Suicide, of course. He must have considered (and then rejected) the options: a gun, its firm steel comforting and masculine but ultimately too messy. Someone would have to clean up after him. Slitting his wrists in the bathtub? A luminal

### Keywords

poem, poetry, polite, death




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August 17, 2012

# Manners

Victoria Bosch Murray

They found him dead in a field two blocks from home. Suicide, of course. He must have considered (and then rejected) the options: a gun, its firm steel comforting and masculine but ultimately too messy. Someone would have to clean up after him. Slitting his wrists in the bathtub? A luminal

nightmare. Or perhaps it was the question of which direction to cut – lateral or median? He never was good with directions. Did he consider pills unreliable or womanly, like a sticky host stuck on the back of the tongue? There's not enough water in the world to wash away that indignity.

Which brings us to drowning at sea, a Sargasso of uncertainty, the estate gyrating for seven long years, a kindness of longitudinal thinking, for sure. A rope? Too painful. This is about ending pain. Gas? The odor of home-cooking, the scent of grandmother with a wooden match – stand back –

whoosh! But he's not a poet. Suicide by cop? He never thought of that, but it could have worked, a heart-pumping rookie with a 44. Or railroad tracks. Tall buildings, bridges, a head-on collision. He had choices. Which is why he walked away as if going to work or play. Nothing odd about this.

He would return, we can almost believe, the house holding hints of him like dust or dishes or sweat, the way it does when we lock the door

in the morning knowing we'll be <sup>Booth, Vol. 4 [2012], Iss. 8, Art. 3</sup>back again at night. Yes, he walked  
two blocks to an empty field scabbed and fallow, dirt like hope

deferred, flint and hard ditches. He used a kitchen knife, part of a  
matched set, the only thing left out of place. He chose dirt, clumped dark  
into mud as it married his blood. No hesitation, just one unmemorable slice  
from left to right, clean enough to let his heart escape his throat.

Victoria Bosch Murray's poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in *American Poetry Journal*, *Field*, *Greensboro Review*, *Harvard Divinity Bulletin*, *Salamander*, *Tar River Poetry*, *The Potomac*, and elsewhere. In 2010, Finishing Line Press published a chapbook of her poems, *On the Hood of Someone Else's Car*. She has an MFA in poetry from Warren Wilson.

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