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POETRY OF MEGAN ROMAN

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For Sale

First there is the gathering—
the sign game, we call it—
pulling thin wire stakes

from their deliberate holes.
You, feeding them, I, curled
in a nest of signs, taking more

in through the window, building
around me a metal and cardboard cage.
Oversized arrows direct us

to unsuspecting new homes:
toward Dunkin' Donuts,
our unassuming blue water tower.

Then there is the supplanting,
the pushing into earth, the regrounding,
the relocating of signs about town.

The claiming
of a teacher's dark lawn,
a friend's corner yard—three signs here.

How thrilling—
how innocent we find it
and yet how much we love it:

to uproot a person's sign
and move the little plastic pieces of this place
like a squared puzzle, a child's game.

No Shoes on the Bed

For years you fell asleep with sneakers on sheets;
you are so proud now, unlacing your shoes.
At last, you've learned, now that I'd have to sleep
with those mud-tracked shoes in my face. The rules
have changed. My head settles down next to your toes
and we are not friends, just upside down lovers.
My feet cuddle up under your pillows,
our knees quietly kiss goodnight under covers.
Late in the dark you crawl beneath blankets,
secretly and suddenly by my side,
unconsciously reaching around my stomach.
So simply our bodies are realigned.
I rub your socked foot with mine and beg the bed
to tell me why it holds us head to head.

Zsa Zsa Gabor to Kemal Ataturk

Fifteen years a Hungarian baby.
My sheets pulled tight by a stiff aging house
keeper. Of doll houses and diamonds
I dreamed. Older sisters with fingers on lips,
flowing night gowns floating out my bedroom door.
Fifteen year Hungarian beauty queen.
A sash read "Desire" swaddled me
in my crib, demanded the eyes and hands
of rich men but deflected them from my gold.
Darling, you didn't know me then. Fifteen
years I slept silent in a binding sash,
in a house kept by that aging woman.
Fifteen years I drank filtered champagne.

Then you grabbed my gold and made me greedy.
Darling, have you seen me in the papers
since that night? I've schlepped around in newsprint
and gloss. Wearing gem encrusted night gowns,
I've searched all the swanky cafes for more
doll houses and diamonds than you promised.
My pale and tired jewel strung limbs have slept
limply for life times under loosened sheets.
I've been collecting their houses, hoping
to rival your one man empire with my
many man dominion. I am famous
now, for my life-long, glamour swaddled search
for a man to recreate that night.

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Megan Ronan is pursuing an MFA in poetry at George Mason University and is the poetry editor of *So to Speak: A feminist journal of language and art*. Her work has recently

appeared or is forthcoming in *Peeks and Valleys: A Southern Journal* and *The Shenandoah Review*.