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Three Poems

by Bethany F. Brengan

Snow White Preserved

All day she has been canning
little red apples
into sauces and butters in
clear glass canisters.

She learned about keeping things—
in Mason jars, in old cookie tins,
in coffee cans, and jewelry boxes
with wobbly ballerinas—from her first
best friend, who gave her a yellow and green
embroidery floss bracelet. “Promise
you’ll keep it forever.”

She had a decision to make:
Wear it every day, until the braid
unraveled in a public swimming pool?
Bury it in the backyard with a fake
gold ring and her favorite plastic comb?
Or smuggle it into adulthood, dragging the chain
from house to apartment to house, forgetting now
who wove the strands together,
but unwilling to toss
any trinket that proves
once upon a time
someone loved her.

She wakes with a start
and strains against the silence.
She lives alone and she thinks someone
has just whispered in her ear.
Pwuh! like bullets, like lips releasing
from kisses, the gold lids pop
all night as the glass cools
and the hermetic seals tighten.

It’s Raining Men

Martha Wash would have testified
at the top of her lungs,
but Magritte murmurs the news
around his non-pipe
and folds back the paper
to read about the false
lure of diamond mines.

Winter/Spring 2008

Editor's Note

Guidelines

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Whirligig Soldier

I don't know if he's retired,
or if he's always lived here
between the gladiolas and the bottle
tree. He has obviously stood a long time
under the sun, under the rain too, I suppose,
and whatever snow there might have been.
He does not march, or even carry
a musket. He exercises his arms
each morning on the lawn, scooping
the air with long, flat hands. Once,
a grasshopper landed on his hat.
He is older than the other residents,
the four-winged birds (who think him dull),
the pinwheels (whose thoughts are as unreadable
as those of daisies or park benches), and the true
birds (who don't think of him at all). He is not trying
to take flight, escape. He has nowhere
to be. But when the wind changes
he will be ready.

Bethany F. Brengan is a freelance writer and editor. She lives on the internet and occasionally on the Olympic Peninsula. She blogs very badly at www.readingwritingraptures.blogspot.com. Her poetry has appeared in *The 2015 Poet's Market*, *Poetry Quarterly*, and *The Sow's Ear Poetry Review*.

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