

Home	<h2>Duly Noted</h2>
Autumn/Winter 2011	<i>by Eric Bennett</i>
Summer 2010	
Spring 2010	Udo Middleman ^[1] adores ^[2] Lily ^[3] .
Winter 2010	
Autumn 2009	
Summer 2009	1 Udo Middleman's appearance can be described in a word – ramshackle. He wears brown trousers, worn through shoes and a wrinkled flannel shirt that looks like it's just been pulled out of the washing machine. His maw smells like a mackerel and he speaks with a braying voice, and as far as anyone knows, he never smiles. Udo looks like an old man shoved into the body of an even older man, grotesquely wrinkled and slumped dramatically. His eyes are furious with life.
Spring 2009	
Autumn 2008	
Summer 2008	
Spring/Summer 2008	
Winter/Spring 2008	Udo lives on Tugaloo Street in Tucson Arizona. His is one of a thousand single-story ranch houses, stony yard sloping down to the river of black asphalt meandering through the neighborhood. Every day is white hot and speckled with carrion crows that skirl and heckle anyone who ventures outside. Udo does not venture outside. Having lived alone the majority of his life he has an affinity for isolation. Udo permits no guests. No phone calls. He does not entertain Jehovah Witnesses or Cutco Knives salesmen.
Editor's Note	
Guidelines	
Contact	
	<p>Out from his living-room window, Udo's eyes look up and down Tugaloo Street like a searchlight. And as every morning for the past two years he waits for the newspaper girl to bike by with the daily paper. He's never actually met her but Udo calls her Lily – he likes the sound of the “L”s so close together: “Llillilly.”</p> <p>2 Udo orders seven cases of artificial spray snow. Stacked in the entryway, the cardboard boxes contain twelve thirteen ounce cans each and stand as tall as a six foot three inch Christmas tree. And though it may be logical to order artificial snow in Arizona, Udo has other appropriations for the aerosol flurries than festive embellishment.</p> <p>The living-room window has thick rust colored curtains. Udo pulls the tatty couch under the window away from the wall and shuttles the curtains to either side letting the morning sunlight streak in. With circular motions, Udo sprays the surface of the window with artificial snow until the glass is covered. Then Udo drags his crooked finger through the synthetic snow leaving clean, clear trails. He writes: “Knock!” The next day he sprays snow over the previous message and fingers: “Come in!” The next day: “I am here!” And so forth, day after day after day.</p> <p>3 Lily's name is not Lily – it's Lorie Geniste. Lorie's soul is packed in eye-catching luggage: supple and bright brown skin, full lips and swivel hips. Her seventeen year old epidermis absorbs the Arizona sun making her warm to touch, luminous. And dark.</p> <p>Lorie has delivered The Sun Times in this neighborhood for two years. And despite the occasional affirmation from the distribution manager, throwing papers has for so long devolved into a collection of lonely tasks. Lorie lives in a space of her own absorption longing for affirmation from someone that odd hours and the color of her skin seem to prohibit. So it makes perfect sense that upon seeing curious invitations scrawled on the window of a house on Tugaloo Street day after day after day that Lorie would venture to respond, tentatively rapping on the heavy wooden door. A hunched old man smelling like Santa Clause and chum opens the door gesturing for Lorie to come inside, his lips stretched as though smiling. She steps in looking back to check on her bicycle left in the driveway – the door snicks shut behind her like a wound closing over the space where it had been.</p> <p>[1] Udo Middleman's appearance can be described in a word – ramshackle. He wears brown trousers, worn through shoes and a wrinkled flannel shirt that looks like it's just been pulled out of the washing machine. His maw smells like a mackerel and he speaks with a braying voice, and as far as anyone knows, he never smiles. Udo looks like an old man shoved into the body of an even older man, grotesquely wrinkled and slumped dramatically. 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She steps in looking back to check on her bicycle left in the driveway – the door snicks shut behind her like a wound closing over the space where it had been.</p>

Eric Bennett lives in New Jersey with his wife and four children. His work appears in numerous literary and art journals including *Dogzplot Flash Fiction 2009 Anthology*, *Back in 5 Minutes Anthology*, *2010 Foliate Oak Anthology*, *Bartleby Snopes*, *Apt*, *decomp* magazinE, *The Battered Suitcase*, *Up the Staircase*, *Prick of the Spindle*, *Slush Pile*, *Stirring*, *Foundling Review*, *LITnIMAGE*, *PANK*, *Drunken Boat*, *Spork Press*, *Splash of Red*, *Fiction at Work*, *Paradigm*, *KneejerK Magazine*, *Metazen*, *Monkeybicycle*, and has been nominated by Foliate Oak for a Pushcart Prize.

