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DOMESTIC DRAMA

An Exploration through Poetry

Tess Congo
University of New Hampshire
Senior Honors Thesis
Advised by Mekeel McBride
Spring 2014

The following works have previously been published in the University of New Hampshire's literary magazine Aegis (fall 2013). These works are a sample of the thirty poems I wrote for my thesis.

ENTRY INTO SOLITUDE

July twenty-seventh, two thousand and seven:

Nothing happened in New Hampshire.

A boy I'd love drew a walrus on his sneaker,
and someday, I'd believe he drew it for me.

A man obsessed with silver shoelaces
hung himself in his wife's boyfriend's bathroom.

In France, I found myself faced with a hole full of shit,
and I decided to hold it in 'til the next gas station.

We drove for miles with expired plates, and
the police did not stop anyone—not us,

not even the man who dragged me out on the cement
and told me to give him my everything.

There was no July 28th.

TO THE OLD YOUNG MAN, MY FAVORITE KISS

If not for you, I could've made that light,
but maybe lightning will strike once, or again,

like every man who has licked me hot.

You told me to stop being so vulnerable, so
I swept my hair into a hard bun and pursed

my lips like a diamond. They say I'll outlive
the winter, and so, if you please, *alstublieft*,

paint me like one of your Alaskan girls—

like the dark-haired one with the owl eyes
who whispers all through the night

that you make her warm again.

THE AMERICAN TREE SPARROW

Dead! Beneath this oak tree,
wearing a leaf like a pillbox hat—
its veil, assuring
private darkness.

Beauty. Such a sealant
for tragedy. What feathers—
fine calico—and what
a sharp beak,
peeking.

I dreamt once—this bird in my bed
cocooned in a pocket of the mattress,
stuffed stiff as if with woodchips.

And finally, I had a choice,
a chance! Once my sister
had buried the pigeon
in my grandmother's garden,
but now—I found the spade,

thin and undented. And I broke
the dirt from the earth. And I—
I found things—my sister's whistle &
a lock of hair that grew
as I yanked it.

And I knew—I could never bury
this bird.