

Bury

by Amelia Gray

William was dead by thirty-eight. The local news usually never showed scenes of death on the highway anymore, as it typically featured the normal offerings of cars upside-down in ditches, families holding each other, et cetera. They melted together unpleasantly, in the opinion of the executive producer of the local news channel. However, he said. William's death featured the usual crumpled auto, the darkness with just enough flashing emergency light to peer into the private pain of others, but the transport truck which had caused the accident was punctured along its side panels, causing the thousands of loose eggs inside to spill out onto the road. Whole, unbroken eggs piled like snowdrifts against the crushed car, inside which William was trapped, taking his last, confused breaths. Emergency workers slipped on yolks.

The unusual circumstances turned the accident into a special-interest piece, and national networks carried the story. Lost friends from across the county sent consolation letters and flowers, with attached notes apologizing for losing touch before addressing the subject of the dead husband.

William and his wife had been in the process of remodeling. William's wife sent the workers home and began burying things in the backyard, smoothing desert land over first the pile of cards and flowers. She buried the two-dozen eggs she had bought the week before with William's dress shoes, his pillowcase and pillow, his coffee cup, his wedding ring, and his belts. She dug a trench and buried the magazines he had insisted on keeping. She rented a backhoe and buried the television.

The news station sent her a box of

chocolate when they won a daytime Emmy for William's story. She planted each truffle, three inches apart, in her garden. When the ants found them she drowned the ants and buried them too.

Nose

by Ravi Mangla

All the things I stuck up my nose growing up come struggling out one night. A slow drizzle of memories. It begins innocently enough: a red Lego brick, a cocktail sword, a tootsie roll, a pre-war nickel. I yank out a baseball cleat by the laces. A tire gauge. One egg, hard-boiled. Two chicken fingers. A set of whiskers poke out, and then the head of a black cat. It leaps down from my nose, arches its back, shakes out its fur. I remember lying in bed with a stuffed nose, mild fever, my parents speeding around town in their rust-checked minivan, flyers rippling in the slipstream. They stayed up all night waiting for the cat to come home, waiting by my bedside, holding my head in their laps. The black cat crouches down and peers beneath the sofa. It's looking for a treat.

so it is that Jimmy hears

by J.A. Tyler

A rock sails through a window and it is Jimmy's hand that has done the throwing. And the glass that shatters, falling in shards around the sill, like a house welling up, Jimmy hears none of it. In his head, Jimmy, when he is listening, the waves that come have words in them and sometimes, when it is night, there is a refrain and it is mother, mother, mother. Water lapping and Jimmy wants to bury his fist in its

sanded hollows, holding tight to the lack of her. Jimmy's motherless shore, his boat filled with water, his sinking. Jimmy would scream but the sound that would dump from his mouth would be a shiver at best, and Jimmy would have no recourse left, no more plans of attack. Jimmy would be standing then, a statue of falling apart, the image of sunless wonder. The rock, it was Jimmy's voice, and it made the beautiful sound of breaking when Jimmy hurled it, his arm a vocal cord, his fingers the branches of words. The movement of Jimmy going deaf, listening only to the repeat, to the mother, mother, mother inside of him, the wail of rippled waves on rocks.

Involving Molly's Hip

by Gregory Sherl

I light candles because maybe I forgot to pay my electric bill. I might have. Did I touch Molly's hip? I can't remember. I have issues with living and I forget the silliest things: did I take my pill this morning? It's snowing and it's quiet and it's pretty and quiet and white. I remember kissing and liking it. In bed, I am a Lego piece. In bed, I can't see the stars but I know them. I even know a few of their names but we're not on the best terms. Why are there too many of some things and not enough of other things? Like grapes. Like panda bears. Like the time between opening your eyes and closing them. In bed, I am alone. My sheets are clean and I am, too. In bed, I smoke expensive cigarettes, the kind that smell of vanilla and come in thin tins. The ashtray is on my stomach; it's white and ceramic and looks like an ashtray.