He Kisses His Pillow

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Class of 2011

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Keywords
creative writing, poetry

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Matt Barrett grew up in Doylestown, PA with his sister, Kelsey, and brother, Zeke. In 2007 he graduated from Central Bucks West High School and is currently pursing English at Gettysburg College. He is a member of the Sigma Chi fraternity, a captain of intramural basketball and soccer teams, and a co-host of WZBT’s radio show, The Sobriety Check. This is his first time appearing in The Mercury.

This poetry is available in The Mercury: http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/mercury/vol2009/iss1/15
He Kisses His Pillow

My friend bends down to kiss his pillow
Because he thinks she’s still there, lying
Beside him breathless and soundless
Like she was the night before. But his lips
Come up dry, with lint in his mouth,
And he dips his head down with tears.

His eyes puff up damp, fill gray with his tears
Because he shares his bed with a pillow;
No woman to hold, no one’s mouth
But his own, his body stiff and lying
At the sensual touch of his lips
No words to say, the room everything but soundless.

Less sound, no sound, soundless,
The alarm clock buzzing, no regard for tears
The snooze pressed once, the violent tug of two lips
A distant memory, a dampened pillow
On which he’s lying:
The deserted love of his mouth.

He thinks of his wife’s mouth
Not dry like his own, soundless
With unspoken words, lying
Felicitous and content, tears
Dried up with his pillow
His once wet, well-spent lips,

Now chapped and dry, encrusted lips
Sick with disease – his mouth
Stuffed and dabbed with the cloth of his pillow,
The street cars go by his window, soundless,
Because the sound of his raining tears
Are enough to stop his lying.

Just last night, she was there, lying,
Soft and pouty lips
Now gone, she shed not a single tear
Not a sound from her aching mouth
She walked out alone, tip-toeing, soundless
While he held her last thread, his pillow.

So now he’s alone, his mouth
Is now dry and worn, his lips
Are now chapped, and he bends over to kiss his pillow.