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Bonedigger

Bethany Frankel

Gettysburg College, franbe02@gettysburg.edu

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Bonedigger

Author Bio

Bethany Frankel is a junior English major with a writing concentration and has a minor in Peace & Justice Studies. When not writing her novel and drinking copious amounts of coffee, she can be found working on her music or petting dogs. She was born and raised in Delaware, which is, in fact, a state.

Bonedigger

BETHANY FRANKEL

I buried my love on a Saturday,
 when the earth was springing back to life.
 The soil was soft and patterned
 with the tracks from newborn birds,
 the setting sun waiting to crash down
 on the lingering horizon.
 I left a note and took a walk
 to my favorite canopied treetop spot,
 pressed my hands into the dirt
 and sighed.
 This was my time.

In order for something to grow,
 you have to plant it.
 Lay it down in the earth,
 turn your back and abandon it.
 So I let my toes dip into the cold soil,
 sank down to my ankles and
 let out a smile.
 When the dirt filled my lungs,
 I closed my eyes,
 and when the ground swallowed me,
 I exhaled my goodbyes.

I buried my heart on a Saturday,
 before love could blacken the golden and pure.
 I packed seeds in my bloodstream,
 watered my hair until it turned green,
 offered wildflowers to the site where I lay,
 unmarked but for a stone,
 left to decay into gray
 until some cruelty kicked it away.

I woke the other night in a sweat,
 jolted in bed and clutched at my neck

in panic to feel the nonexistence.
No pulse, just skin,
there is no way for love to creep in
without my permanent permission.
Something clouded my sight,
blinded by divine light
that whispered for me to
slip on shoes and wander
through the clouded night.

Pink petals and obsidian stones
sprinkled the ground around me,
imposters of daggers and insidious outsiders
that dragged me subconsciously
to the girl that I buried,
her murder cold but still fresh.
The birds shrieked in the midnight moon
and their distress draped my hands,
still healing still bleeding,
the caked red clay stains
sunk deep into flesh.

I know this place by memory,
see I can retrace it with eyes closed--
it's ten steps into oblivion
and a sharp turn to the left,
slashing overgrown vines with fingernails
in a frenzy to get to the final resting place
and it has my name on it.
I brought a shovel this time.
I intend to make it back alive.

The ground still contains the last
aspects of winter,
blade slicing through bloodied soil
with a final, metallic clash.
The woods watch me and take in the view:
the fading light, the tired
weary eyes clouded and foggy
from too many days displaying
a heart to sun when I damn well knew
the daylight would kill me if I let it.

Strands of hair fall into my mouth
and my lips part in a sigh and I
hit home--

I
strike bone--
oddly white in the earth,
bleached and clean,
pure.

I cannot wait to dig properly
and I crash to my knees,
an animalistic sound escaping from me
as my greedy hands encircle
the skeleton of my past,
pulling out bone after bone,
and building them back
into some semblance of
the girl I once loved.

I buried her so she would remain golden,
but now I am a gravedigger
and she is my home,
a reanimated version of myself
that believed in love at first sight
and bloomed in the sunlight.
I touch her bones
and she comes back to life,
exhaling magic and
inhaling life.
My ghost trades places with her
and I cover my corpse
with the spring soil.

I think,
this time,
I'm going to keep her.