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## Utica

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## **Cover Page Footnote**

"First Prize" Appeared in the issue: April 2001.

First Prize  
Kelly Barnes

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**Utica**

**B** I was born in this broken home,  
**R** where the streets wear dirt  
**O** under fountains and brightly painted  
**K** murals  
**E** like a cheating father wears shame  
**N** under a cheap business suit.

**F** Water falls in a stream  
**O** to the concrete below  
**U** the eye of this booming metropolis  
**N** hurricane  
**T** just as busy as those who hurry by  
**A** intent on its job  
**I** of being beautiful  
**N**

**J** I am young in this old jungle  
**U** where the crack dealers hide behind corners  
**N** like snakes in the grass waiting for prey  
**G** where the business world steps over the  
**L** homeless  
**E** as if they are already dead.

**G** I grew up in this ghostyard,  
**H** where the windows  
**O** of closed warehouses and shopping malls  
**S** once smudged by the red lips of children  
**T** fogged by their warm cookie breath  
**S** now lay in shards on the floor.

**S** I am on a lawn that just 10 years ago  
**T** seemed to stretch for miles in  
**R** this city with no future but such a past,  
**E** in this city with nothing to offer but its  
**T** character,  
in this city that raised me into  
**C** the strange young woman I've become  
in this city where my lawn doesn't stretch  
**H** quite as far as it used to.