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Papa

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Cover Page Footnote

"First Prize Winner" Appeared in the issue: Volume 10, Issue 9, 2009.

poetry by
SARAH CHRISTY

A plaid bangle at the overturned cuff of his heaviest coat,
solid, starched,
expected;
“in good times and in bad.”

Bundled flowers on winter-corners, for change;
velvet roses blushing beneath crisp paper blankets.

He drops his thick fingers into his pockets, one by one 'til five,
straightens the wheel under his elbow, hollows his boots, swims through the heads of their children
together, past the buoy at the stove, counting four courses, two desserts,
and five brown-haired regrets.

Wants, for more than cabinets of broken cups,
or handfuls of dimes,
or Christmas dinner,
health, family,
each other.

Cold, hollow boots in the entryway.
Rough-knuckled goodnight kisses, for not knowing better.
Two kids with five more, for not knowing better.