Stale

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Stale

Abstract
In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"I slide a few more tired quarters into the jukebox coin slot and browse the rundown albums, swaying slightly. Grateful Dead: "Casey Jones." "Shakedown Street." I'll need a few more drinks."

Cover Page Footnote

This prose is available in The Angle: https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol2007/iss3/5
SPINNING
BY CHANNYN QUINN

she's spinning
smile plastered on her face
cheeks pushed back by force
smiling as the world
rotates around her
one color running into the next
yellowredgreenblue
spinning as
shades of life
blur into excitement and allusion
not knowing what she's gotten herself into
this wild ride
this wild life
and she's spinning.

STALE
BY KARA DREBITKO

I slide a few more tired quarters into the jukebox coin slot and browse the rundown albums, swaying slightly. Grateful Dead: "Casey Jones." "Shakedown Street." I'll need a few more drinks.

Back to the comfort of the worn-out barstool, and here is my legacy.
Leaning into the cracked wood, I grin at the bartender. "Hey, sweet cheeks. A few more of the same'll do me." I watch as she pours the whiskey, apathetic and bored. I wonder where her mind is: her boyfriend? her baby? Hell, maybe she's a dyke.

This idea gets me and I find myself chuckling into the liquor.

I inspect the crude etchings that cover the bar. "Jill and Bobby, '83." A pot leaf. A phone number.

"Hell, darlin', I'll take another."
The warmth grows from the inside out. Inhibitions gone, I try to chat up the pretty thing.

"Now, how would you like to meet for coffee sometime?" She keeps pouring, smiling, but doesn't say a thing. She's a real cutie.

Well beyond the point of tasting, I down the next glass, and I can't stop staring. Her hair is what gets me. That's gotta be the nicest part about women. It's like a black flag waving around their femininity.

Depression starts to set in, and I know I should call it a night.

"How 'bout one more?" This time I don't even look at her. I'm fifty two and she's Lolita. She's twenty-four and I'm no one.

I use the bar to lift myself up and I leave a nice tip. With heavy feet, I roll out the door and perform my favorite ritual. Pick up the pay phone. Dial. One ring. Wait. Two rings. Wait--

"Hello, Jon."
"Evenin', Sarah."
"I thought we agreed this wouldn't happen anymore."
"Shit, I know. It was the bartender. Reminded me of you. Same hair and everything..."