

**2014 Roger M. Jones Poetry Contest  
Fourth Place: Molly Felner**

**When the Credits Roll, Look for my Name**

When I am dead, my dearest  
go home.  
Watch my favorite movie.  
I won't be there to care  
if you don't laugh at any jokes  
or fast-forward through a sex scene.  
I won't know if you cry  
when it all fades to black  
and if you do  
you'll have to find someone else  
to poke you in the ribs  
until you laugh again.

## Nighttime on the Ohio Turnpike

You're asleep in the passenger's seat,  
curled up like the wires in the cigarette lighter between us.  
Passing streetlamps shed dull light on your Kentucky colored curls:  
a glimmer of gold at the seafloor of an unfathomable night.

You and I,  
we live for quick exits  
key lime pie in a takeout box behind the backseat  
sleeping in yesterday's jeans  
holes in the knees growing wider and wider  
your boots by the bed  
toes pointing off into tomorrow.

It's miraculous  
how that last gallon of gas always lasts  
how another Motor Inn always looms up out of darkness  
that presses against rain-speckled windows  
and pools in ruts of rumble-strips  
as though it were a dark oil  
dripping down into damp potholes at Mo's Marathon service station  
halfway between Peru, Maine, and home.

I want you to be here forever

for the odometer to tick away each mile  
as wrinkles sharpen around your eyes-  
bluer than the sky seen without sunglasses  
bought at a grimy BP where you pumped gas for the first time  
your hand white-knuckling around the nozzle as though it was a viper's head.

The road stretches out before us  
a tongue uncoiling from a wide black mouth.  
I'd follow it past white teeth  
down a shadowy throat  
put on windshield wipers against tar-colored fluids  
if you'd sit shotgun urging me on  
fist pounding out a dashboard rhythm.

I can't help wishing you'd wake up  
and sing along to whatever's playing on the radio at this hour,  
but I have to keep going as long as I am able  
until you wake up and it's my turn to sleep  
my head nestled carefully between metal and worn leather.  
I can smell your scent if I lie that way:

Ohio cornflowers in the breeze and a hint of sweat.

## **Run like the Wind**

Anna ran with the boys at recess  
her small shoes striking blacktop  
pounding with an urgency that matched her heart's rhythm.  
After each race her chest leapt so high  
I wanted to shove her breath back in with my hands.

She won only once  
on a sunny Tuesday in mid-October.  
I cheered for her  
she didn't hear  
but she turned once  
right before the chain link finish line  
and blew me a kiss  
twisting lightly on one heel.

I reached for it  
but it caught in her wake  
and sailed away from my fingers.  
Her long hair was sweeping into eddies,  
her foot stepping up onto a passing breeze.

## **The Old House**

Narrow pipes beneath worn floorboards pulse like veins.  
I used to feel their heat and hear the whispering rush of fluid  
circulating through the empty caverns in the walls.  
The whole house used to beat  
  people flowing in the front and out the back  
with a steady th-thmp th-thmp of doors slamming.  
Now money eyed women come cutting  
each room into pieces  
with a scalpel's grim purpose.  
Now we are leaving:  
the rhythm quickens, then drops off.  
Half-drawn windows gaze glassily  
from hollows within jaundiced siding.  
We draw the blinds  
and lock the door one final time.