

**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.