December 2017

After My Mother Beats Me

Erica Hughes

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege

Part of the Creative Writing Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege/vol46/iss2/7
After My Mother Beats Me

E. Hughes

This poem was previously published in *Joint Literary Magazine*, Issue 3, 2017. E. Hughes is a Dordt College alumna, 2016.

Mother has fists full of my collar. She is pulling me down from the long-backed leather chair. I am on the white linoleum kitchen floor, between a wall and the grand clear-glass table in our one-bedroom apartment. Mother stands over me then leans in real close, wrinkles and stretches a new place in my collar. There’s a faint ringing; it’s sour in my sinuses. I see Mother’s boyfriend in the corner trying to look. There’s a half-eaten hotdog on the ground. Brother’s face is wet. The yellow light above the stove casts shadows on the sink piled with dirty dishes. Sister is flailing her arms and mouthing something. I can’t hear. Something sour in my nose, metallic. Mother’s hot breath like oil on my lips. I can’t hear. My head hits the ground. Again. Again. Mother has a leather belt and my shoes. Everything stings. The taste of salt enters my mouth. She might kill me; I don’t want anyone else to kill me but her.