

BUTCH (*For Leslie Feinberg*)

in june bodies move underwater,
such shimmering creatures.
S, the powdered moth-wing femmes,
and me- greasy out-of-towner,
queer.

he dances me
into his bedroom & we strip,
pick out virus-colored party drips.
i've never worn men's clothes
i didn't steal but these feel alright.

cruise million-dollar neighborhoods on
silver ankle-breaker scooters,
the old spanish style, red roof tile,
a swamp-pooled
house sits empty.

runt of the pack, i climb through windows
toothed with broken glass.
the abandoned house was sinking,
a lung overfilled with black water or treasure.
A room of broken dolls,
pounds of medical records- bad cancer,
The World According to Garp.

i stumble home half past the dew point,
sweating in his clothes,
feebly fighting with my chopped haircut.
tonight, i sleep in the heat dreaming
in languages i can never quite understand,

that have words for someone like me,
and when i wake i will be different.
I will be a brother, a shimmering butch
or a silver sunfish,
never quite breaking the surface

or passing through.

VARSITY

Her curved karambit face
coaxes a stomach open and open.
Lit by blue static snow,
the tv says *texas forever*
the tv says *let's touch God this time, boys.*

Nothing left in the bottle but her eyelash,
or rusting in the driveway but a body
buried under the Silverado.

It's five in the morning and we have practice tonight.
We'll blow our knees out for real this time,
run ourselves into the ground till the tunings
snap and the mosquitoes find us.

She knots fishbones into her oil spill hair,
chain-smoking end to end to end
in the front seat saying, *Yeah, now we're going somewhere, yeah.*
The Silverado sits on cinder blocks and says nothing.

Let's shoot ourselves and bury our bodies in the back garden
beneath the wild blackberry swath,
let's cook a fatty dinner and lick up the frying pan.
We'll play hard tonight like gladiators gasping
till they're just dogs in mud.

We were two live wires in a shallow pool,
every touch left the bottom of my feet charred black.
We can't stand each other, but she never cuts
her nails and I like having my spine scratched.

LOW ORBIT

You, shooting down old satellites
from the open window of your dad's salt-bitten truck.

They make lonely sounds falling into
dark swimming pools and neat fingers of whiskey,

Hello Pioneer—
Hello Six, Seven, Eight, and Nine
Hello E.

Softly it goes— the hand-hewn body,
the weakened shakes of going clean.
I could be safe at your hip,

but you're scared of becoming an alcoholic
so you'll never stop drinking.

All stitches wetly cut with nail clippers
exhaling into the lanugo of your green mohair.
The colors will never be right again—

but I wear it each winter after you, when

every fallen star is Sputnik with a bullet in her chest,
every icicle turns to flowstone and brings the roof down.

For the longest time we were
fat happy children roving the hotlands,
the street signs written in Nadsat,
having never tasted a cold night
north of Anaheim.

Your mother mourned and missed you,
your sister disappeared.
And me
And me
wondering if it is Mars I'm seeing
in the naked sky after a whiteout,
Or just Red-Eye 1 (Pinot, Merlot, Cabernet).

Either way, I don't have a glove big enough
to catch it in its plummet.

can read minds
and
weep
and
weep
and
weep.
It will seep all over you.

No one should ever try to fall in love.
Not even you. Not
even your heart.

CARSON YOUNG

Carson Young is a poet, storyteller, and artist. His twin interests in poetry and biology are diffused in the same solvent: a fascination with the body. His writing seeks to interrogate the enmeshed nature of queerness/transness, eating disorders, catholic mythology, and surrealism.

Young returns to the topic of catholicism again and again in his work. He describes a deep appreciation for the phrase “passion” in all its meanings– a form of love, a method of suffering, a place of fantasy and storytelling. He graduated from the University of California Santa Barbara with a BA in Writing & Lit. Currently, he is a graduate student and teaches in the First Year Writing Program at Emerson College in Boston. He has two pet rats named Fuse and Juice.