

Fayette County Literary Magazine



A Celebration of Student Work
Fayette County Public Schools
Lexington, KY

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Digital Photography
by Jacob
James Lane Allen Elementary

In this issue...

*Featuring Elementary STLP Digital Art soon to be displayed at the
Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference March 8-11, 2006 Louisville, KY*

" A warm welcome awaits you at the Ethie Castle, an ancient limestone fortress dating from the 15th century. Ethie Castle is a retreat of peace and tranquility. Dine in the magnificent kitchen with its massive stone fireplace where a warm fire is always glowing. If you listen carefully you may be able to hear the music from parties of the past..."

by John

[The Ethie Castle](#)

"I was on a roller coaster ride last summer. Not one you ride on for fun at Kings Island, but an emotional one. I was at the top of my roller coaster in the beginning of the summer, because I was just about to get my very first puppy! Little did I know ..."

by Kristin

[Saying Goodbye to Dessey](#)

"Marcasite looked away from the mirror, refusing to think of her past any longer and wishing she had some control. She searched her mind for something else to focus on and fill her mind with, something happy. She glided across the room and gazed out her white marble window, detailed with tree and leaf engravings, and looked at the soft, grassy ground far below her. There she saw a group of elves her own age that she recognized vaguely from somewhere..."

by Tiffany

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ATP II

by Tiffany

A single tear escaped my woeful eyes as I turned the knob of the flimsy door. Sinking to the pitiful looking tile floor. I grasped my exit from reality that sat wrapped in my pocket. Slowly I took it out and unwrapped it with care after I heard the comforting click of the door that I had locked. "Wouldn't want anyone barging in while I had this in my hand, now would I?" I sort of chuckled to myself. I stroked the blade as if it were some lost love of my past.

Another tear made its way through my eyelashes and down my cheek as I thought of the song I knew so well. "Why won't it fade? Outside I had to lie, I'm okay. Inside my body troubled, full of hate. I had to let it out, before its too late..." Well, its better late than never, I thought mournfully as I pressed the cold, jagged blade into my skin. I gave an awful shudder of breath and began to slowly rip it across my shaking forearm, tears forming as fast as blood all over me. Why did they do this to me?

I glance at the sign as we pass it by. "The Ridge", it says. The sign seems welcoming enough and the appearance of the place as far as I can see, looks homey. My nails slowly etch out of my palms and I take a breath. It doesn't seem as bad as I had heard, with bars and cell doors. I couldn't see any of that sort of thing yet. My mind put the word on 72 font across my brain. Yet. I was sure they were there somewhere.

We walk through the glass doors, my knees shaking invisibly inside my jeans. Mom and I walk towards the small window in the front of the parlor. I take a look around at my doom. It's a welcoming foyer and waiting room, much like a doctors office. 'breathe tiff' I tell myself as I inhale slowly. Mom looks at me and asks if I'm alright. I nod my head and smile, unable to speak.

The register person gives us a clipboard with papers on it and asks us to have a seat. I sit down in a noisy chair, sitting rigidly and motionless, eyes darting from the TV to the girl crying about 5 feet away. I wonder *why* she's crying, but think it better not to ask. After a while, mom finishes the paper work and we are left in the waiting room to wait. "evaluation dial 180...evaluation 180...", the speaker crackles throughout the hospital.

Finally, after what seems like forever, we are called back by a staff member named Lisa. "Hi Tiffany, back this way please" I nod and follow her past a mural on the wall that I would become all too familiar with. Lisa points to a room off to one side of the widened and blank hallway. I walk in and immediately lose my impression of the interrogation room image I had. There were four armchairs in a room painted peach with carpeting throughout. After being motioned to sit down, I plop down in the armchair closest to the wall in the corner. No surprises were these people going to pull over on me.

Lisa makes herself comfortable, and begins the evaluation. She asks me all sorts of questions, and I slowly got more comfortable and found a way to look at Lisa in a way I didn't have to watch mom's reactions to my often one worded answers. We work slowly through the obvious questions like why I was there and what seemed to be the problem and things like that. Then we got into mental history of the family and questions such as "do you know where you are and why you're here?" to make sure I didn't have some awful disorder, the whole time with me looking at the floor a lot, concentrating on my breathing.

When we were finished, Lisa left and we were left to ourselves in the quiet of the room. I immediately closed my eyes, relieved that it was over for a

while and I didn't have to think until she came back. I was exhausted as if I had run a mile. All I wanted to do was sleep and forget the whole thing ever happened. I hadn't told my mother in a crowded waiting room that I had been cutting myself. I hadn't gone back for the physical as if nothing was wrong. I hadn't told my doctor when she went to raise my sleeve what she was about to see. But I had, and there was no getting past it. So I opened my eyes to my mother pacing closed them back when she turned around.

When Lisa came back, she said that the doctor had decided to admit me. Something inside of me dropped. I hadn't expected to be admitted, not really. I just looked at her with a look that pronounced I wasn't surprised and nodded. She said I was probably, scared and that it wasn't as bad as I might have heard it was. She didn't know the half of it, although I just kept that stare going for as long as I had to look at her. She said she used to work on the unit back in girls adolescence, and that it was really a nice place and I would fit right in. I wasn't so sure, but somewhere inside, something was comforted.

We sat at the other side of the room at a desk that stood in a corner with two chairs for me and my mom to sit at. Lisa took the chair behind the desk and got out a packet of papers. I noticed her unnaturally long nails as she tore through the plastic of the packet. Lisa took them out and began to scribble on the top one. As she scribbled, she explained what the paper said and where mom had to sign. I zoned out, bored of this and worried about what it would be like back on the unit. Would they try to kill me in my sleep? They kept very scary people here. I had heard the stories and believed them. Here with the crazy kids and adults in a confined space, that's where I was.

When she was finished, we followed her back to the unit. We walked through hallways and made turns towards the "Youth Units", past the more familiar mural that signaled we were close to the way out. We came to what looked like a nurses station to me and turned left after sets of huge doors that were locked to which Lisa had a key to around her upper arm. Then we came to the locked ward or "the unit" as I came to call it after everyone else. We came to another single locked door and walked through.

The first thing I noticed at first entry was the smell. It definitely smelled like a unit of 20 or so girls. Then I saw a bunch of girls in a well worn room on the other side of what was to be called the "Day Room". The tile flooring was yellow and blue and the walls yellow. To the left there was another nurses station, but smaller than the first. It looked to me as if the girls in the room were having some sort of get together with a few staff members to guide them. What they were actually doing was having a group therapy time before phone calls and snack. When I came onto the unit, a few people's heads turned, and then they all looked. Actually this calmed me down a bit because they all looked to be about my age.

I walked into a back room and was told to wait with my mother until a nurse came to go over the paperwork and such. So I waited and they brought a tray for me to eat supper when I told them I hadn't eaten all day. This was the beginning of a major problem while I was there. Apparently I was going to find out the hard way that you're not supposed to skip breakfast and lunch and then not eat supper. I didn't eat the ham, turkey and cheese sub sandwich and they didn't fuss about it, figuring I had had a long day and didn't feel much like eating.

When the nurse came back with the paperwork, I expected to zone out once again to take in my surroundings. But then the nurse began asking me the questions, not my mother and so I had to pay attention. It began much like the admission questions with things such as "why are you here?" and "why did you start?" to which I replied "I don't know exactly" and didn't get a very fond reaction. I answered all the questions exactly what I thought mom could bear hearing and that's all. By the end the comment the nurse had was "well, so basically, the only reason you're here is to see why you've been cutting yourself. You seem normal to me." I just smiled that smile I had given Lisa and was silent. If only this woman knew.

The short blonde nurse named Amy left us in the blank room. A few minutes later she came back with a cocky looking young doctor who had plainly seen too many crazy girls to be able to deal with a "normal" one. He asked me to stand without even saying hello. I obliged and stood. He went through the motions of a physical and then threw a black box into my hands for me to hold and checked my eyes and ears roughly. He asked me to touch my toes and so I did and then said "you are lucky I was here, you would have had to wait until tomorrow because I'm usually not here this late" then said bye without looking at me and left.

Amy came back and told me to say bye to my mother and then she would walk her to the door while I went into the unit. Mom said a quick goodbye and kissed me on my cheek then left with Amy. I glanced at the clock in the nurses station. 8:00 pm. It had taken 5 hours to get back to the unit after I had gotten there at 3:00 pm. The group the girls had been having had let out and

they were mingling in the Day Room. I leaned up against the far corner and sincerely hoped no one would notice me.

Just then a girl named Sandy came up to me and asked me my name and to rate my day on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the best and 1 being the worst. She seemed as if she had done this many times and was very bored with it. I slowly found my voice and said "well ...I guess something like a 2 or 3..." "What was good and bad?" she spit out as soon as she scribbled down my answer. "Well I came here, but it doesn't seem awful" and she got halfway through writing that down and stopped. I wondered what was wrong then she turned around to a tall woman with very short hair and who looked rather like a flamingo to me and asked "Carrie, do I do reflections on her? She just got here." Carrie turned and said, "Oh hello. No, don't do her, she hasn't had a very good day I bet. And step back from her, she hasn't had her skin assessment yet" I was a little confused as to what a skin assessment was, but I figured I would find out eventually. I looked at a clock on the wall inside the nurses station. 8:30 pm.

As I had guessed, I would find out eventually what a skin assessment was. After I was told to wait in a room for about a half an hour, away from all the other girls, the nurse and an MHA (mental health assistant) came and got me. They told me to go to my room that was assigned to me and head to the bathroom in the back. When I stepped through the threshold of the doorway, I was surprised to see it didn't look like a hospital room. It looked like a hotel room with two beds and a bathroom in the back and a window that reached all the way to ceiling from a foot off the floor.

I walked towards the back of the room. One bed was unmade and bare, while the other closest to the door was roughly made in blue blankets. By the time I got to the bathroom, the nurse and the MHA were there in the doorway. As I turned around to see them, I noticed about 5 girls in my doorway talking to each other and looking at me. I smiled at them a warm smile and turned towards the bathroom. I asked the nurse what I supposed to do. With her, she carried a paper with a full page picture of a blank persons naked body on it. As she answered, I figured it out. It was a full body checkup for any bruises, cuts, scars, or marks of any kind. As they found them, they would mark them down on the paper with the body on it.

As she took out the paper, I changed into my hospital gown on the other side of the bathroom door. I folded my clothes and gave them to the MHA who was with the nurse. She slowly put on gloves and began going through all my clothes one by one. "Please take off your jewelry" the nurse asked me to do as the MHA took my eyeliner out of my pocket and put it aside. I took it all off and set it on the bare bed. Then I came out from behind the door for the nurse to see me, with the hospital gown wrapped tightly around me and my arms folded. "Let me see your head first" she said, as she checked my face and neck for marks. "What are all those brown spots on your neck?" she asked. "They are caused by my diabetes. It's a symptom." I answered. She nodded and scribbled something in the margin of her paper. Then she asked to see my arms. I slowly stretched them out in front of me, shakily as ever.

She said to the sight of them, "my god, honey child" then she asked me to count the scars for her. I did and got my totals. 64 on the left forearm, 75 on

the right forearm, 11 on the upper left, and 7 on the upper right. Plus three on each wrist. Then there were 5 on my left leg. She made circles around each part of my body I had scars and cuts on and then made slashing marks all over the circles. She then drew a line from the circle and put the exact amounts that I had come up with on to the side. Then she had me do something very odd. She asked me to quickly show her my torso from under the gown. I kind of stared for a minute and made an odd face then complied, very quickly. She wrote down my birthmark on my lower back and then announced that we were finished. By that time, the MHA had completed the check of my clothes and had folded them up on my bed for me. They gave me some privacy and let me put my clothes back on. They took my jewelry, eyeliner and papers in my pocket and left me bed sheets. Then they left the room.

Slowly my would be roommate made her way into the room. The first thing I honestly noticed was her size. She looked kind of mean as well as big. A lot bigger than me. It was time for them to go to bed, so then she made her way into the room and introduced herself. "Hey, I'm Tina" she said. I smiled and replied "Hey. My name's Tiffany" "It's time for us to go to bed. Want help with your bed stuff to make it up?" she asked politely. "No, thanks, I can get it. I think", I said laughing softly. I picked up a white sheet and began making up my bed while Tina crawled into hers.

"So what are you here for?" she asked, once she was settled in watching me. Used to the question by now, I stated simply enough, "cutting". "oh." she said. "there are a few people here for that now. Can I see?" "uh-sure-I guess..." I stuttered, pulling up my sleeves. "ohhhh-wow" she said. "I don't think anyone

here is as bad as that. Except maybe for Emily. But hers are old, not like yours." confused as to who Emily was, I finished up my neatly made bed and sat down to chat and get to know Tina a bit. "So what are you here for?" I asked curiously, crossing my legs. "Aggression" she said simply as well, as though worn out of the question. "I see. Well what did you do?" I inquired of her, interested in the story I knew had to be there.

"Well, this boy tried to get smart with me and I threatened to kill him and beat him up. Since I've done that a couple of times now, they sent me here" and that was the end of that. I kind of smiled and shifted my position on the bed as I began my story that I felt obligated to give, because Tina was looking at me expectantly. "Well yesterday my best friend told a counselor that I had been cutting. So my counselor called me to her office at the end of the day and asked me point blank if this was true. I replied with just a blank stare. Then she asked to see them and I shook my head no. she shrugged and began talking to me about all these different things. I had no idea what she was saying, I was so shocked that someone had told her and trying to figure out who it was." Tina interrupted with "obviously.. That sounds awful" and so I nodded and continued. "Then I finally got out of the office and ran to a bathroom, ignoring the teacher who yelled at me for running in the hall. I just stood there and looked at myself in the mirror, focusing on breathing. I almost forgot where I was, I was so caught up in thinking about what had just happened and what was likely to happen afterwards.

I walked back into my practical stats class and sat down at my desk, shaking and eyes burning. I glance over at a friend of mine, Jamarr, and he

looked at me concern written all over his face. He had never seen me cry, and here I was on the edge of tears in the middle of class."

"Poor thing" Tina commented sympathetically. I just kind of looked at her funny and continued. "So when the teacher got done giving the lesson, I went over and sat next to Jamarr and just put my head down while the teacher gave out worksheets. Jamarr leaned close and asked "what's wrong?" I replied with a blunt "nothing" while my eyes continued to burn. He wrapped his arms around my shoulders and asked again, with an added "tell me" so I told him, in complete tears by now and shaking while trying to sputter out my sentences. We spent the rest of class sitting there, me watching him do the worksheet that I had left, forgotten, on the table in front of me.

When the bell rang to leave school, I waited until I saw Holly, my best friend pass by my class to leave the room so that I wouldn't be faced with everyone alone. When she passed I told her that I didn't have to go to my locker and that I needed to talk to her. She looked at me and said okay. We walked down the hallway and met up with Connie, another friend of mine. I politely told her that I needed to talk to Holly for a minute and so she left, promising to come back. By the time that we got to the door, I had told Holly about what had happened. Holly just had an uncomfortable look on her face and just nodded her head. Then Connie came screaming up the hallway for me, trying to catch me before I left the building. "Before you go off on Holly, it wasn't just her, it was me too..." she gasped "what?" I said confused, not putting one and one together. And so I found out that Holly and Connie had been the ones who had told on me. I finished my story up lamely.

Tina just looked at me for a minute then said "you're a good story teller, you know that?" "uhhh-thanks" I said sheepishly. Just then an MHA came in and said that we had to turn out our lights and lay down. "Okay, thanks" I said. Evidently that was not normally said to them when they told us to go to bed, because Tina shot me an odd look again. The MHA turned out our lights and told us to sleep tight. I laid down on the bed and tried to get comfortable. It definitely wasn't home. Although I dropped off into a restless sleep right away to the sounds of Tina snoring, I wasn't going to stay that way. Every hour I woke up, and finally at three I got up and paced my room. In less than five minutes the night shift MHA came and asked me if I was okay. "I'm fine, its just my first night here, thanks" "I understand" she replied to my comment "just come up to the nurses station at the end of the hall if you need anything" then she left the room.

I sat on the edge of my bed, sinking in the events of the past evening. 'I'm at *The RIDGE*.' I thought. 'I'm in a nuthouse. I must be crazy. How did I get myself into this?' I got up and noticed a red light blinking on the ceiling. It was a motion detector.

The next morning, after almost no sleep, they woke me up at 6:45 am to get my blood for testing. As I laid on the bed waiting for her to take it, I thought about my thoughts the night before. I needed to ask Tina a couple questions, but when would she wake up? Noon? Did she even get up for breakfast? I had no idea. Then I heard other people walking down the hall way and saw them getting up. Then I heard the night shift MHA calling people from their doorway to "get up for meds" and the first of my fourteen days at The Ridge began.

Day of Green Fire

by Tiffany

Marcasite strolled across her brightly lit room. She was pacing. Bored and thoughtful. She glanced at her reflection in the seeing-glass while passing it. Green. That was the color looking back into her through those deeply saddened eyes of hers. Immediately, she knew with a pang of foreboding, that she would have to continue the fight tonight as she always did on Green Days.

All elves had an individual, natural-born gift all to themselves, that was said to one day help them in their time of greatest need by the elder elves, all knowing and wise. Although sometimes the way of your gift being useful is not always able to be seen until the moment comes that it is needed; the statement had been proven true repeatedly.

Marcasite certainly did not see what hers could be. At her time of birth in the great maple tree of foresight eight elvin years (16 human years) ago, her mother had been told what her beautiful, silver haired and multi colored eyed child's gift was. It was quite a unique gift, not given previously to any other elf to that date. It was a gift they deemed "eye depth" for it was truly remarkable. Marcasite's eyes changed colors depending on her mood. To be sure, her mother pinched her. Fire red and blazing, Marcasite's eyes flashed upwards in unmistakable anger.

When asked of what use this gift could be to her daughter, the elders answered her mother by saying that they could never really be sure, and even if they were, they were sworn by oath not to tell. But the elders did reveal that there was something different about Marcasite.

That became apparent when, at the age of 13, the age where most elvish young women were out in the forest collecting flowers, she began to seclude herself alone in her room and talking less and less, which was most un-elven like. No one in the small community knew just what was wrong, but the elders just nodded their heads sadly in the canopy of their tree unspeaking of this "silent girl".

Marcasite looked away from the mirror, refusing to think of her past any longer and wishing she had some control. She searched her mind for something else to focus on and fill her mind with, something happy. She glided across the room and gazed out her white marble window, detailed with tree and leaf engravings, and looked at the soft, grassy ground far below her. There she saw a group of elves her own age that she recognized vaguely from somewhere in her pained and lost memory, standing around a flower garden smelling the flowers. Then, as they felt her captivated gaze above them, they looked to the skies and saw her. The group immediately turned back and lowered their voices to the hushed tones she had heard her mother use down the hall when she was talking about Marcasite's strange habits.

Slightly irritated by this gesture from them, she turned away and went to her bed racefully lowered herself onto it, thinking. Just as she began to get lost in her confused maze of thoughts once more, she began to wonder in the back of her mind why she did this day after day. Answering herself, she assumed it was because thoughts cannot be controlled by mind alone, it also takes the spirit to usher them away or bring them in. She remembered hearing that somewhere, but didn't remember exactly where, for her past was mostly a fog of misery except for the outstanding Green Days, which were very vivid to her. She soon brushed the thought away and buried it among the others lost inside her, and placed her slivery head in her arms and slept, somewhat peacefully.

Awaking hours later from her normal, demon-filled dreams, Marcasite glanced again into her seeing glass. Green as a clover, her eyes looked back at her. Only she truly knew what each color meant for her mood, and some even she wasn't sure about. She was sure about green though. Green was a combination of sadness, self-blame, and anger. Everything she hated in herself. She also knew what happened when she awoke to Green eyes. As soon as the night sky stretched her arms over their forest home, a sudden wind would hit her that she was unable to fend *off*, ignore, or block out. It was all the emotions of her Green eyes, attacking her at once, torturing her

slowly until she gave into the uncontrollable power and preformed the most painful curse she knew to try to override the feelings. So far, it had worked every time, this spell of Inner Fire, that caused enough physical pain to drive it away. Her magic was unknown by her parents and unspoken of by the elders.

Marcasite personally liked this pain, it made her feel more real and in touch with reality than anything else did in her enchanted home. No words could describe the power it gave her, to be able to drive away these feelings, even when it seemed they had complete control over her, it meant she still had some power over herself.

While she was contemplating how long she would be able to resist this time, she realized with a gasp that it was already night. She rushed to her window. The mother moon was high above keeping watch on her children of the night. Marcasite panicked and ran to her mirror. Her eyes blazing, it took her suddenly and without warning. There was no time for her to prepare an emotional defense against it, so it therefore took her quickly. Confused and dazed by the power, while overwhelmed by her mind, she referred to the Inner Fire spell, to attempt to be rid of it for at least tonight. The spell finished, she lumbered over to the middle of her room and braced herself for the shock. Burning, it began. A slight warm feeling throughout her body, then a burning sensation that should have incinerated her instantly if it had been real. And yet to her, it was real. In her mind, it was real.

No matter, the spell worked perfectly as it always did, and the Green emotions left in a haze from her exhausted mind and body for one more night. The result was her lying panting on the floor paralyzed by the invisible pain, the agony of her mind reaching its limit quickly, and the sheer overload

of her fried nerves. She struggled to her knees, her mind racing in search of an answer to end this once and for all. For it had been happening more regularly, as often as thrice a week and she didn't know how much longer she could hold out like this.

Her mind slowly but surely shifted to the answer she had been searching for and that had crossed her mind more than once before that moment. If she ended her life, she could end the accursed pain forever. Both the Green feelings and the addictive physical pain she felt when they arrived. She would never have to face any of this ever again. Mindset, she prepared herself to begin the advanced form of the Inner Fire spell she had used on herself, a real burning spell. This spell was so powerful, it could easily burn her alive before she felt any warming sensation at all. Quick and simple.

She stood trembling to her feet one last time to look at the accursed eyes on more time accusingly before she plummeted herself into the death they had caused. She looked at herself as she slowly brought her eyes up to look through her own and saw an amazing thing. Blue. Blue as the sky. That was what was looking back at her. She had only once seen that color in her whole life that she could remember. Blue was calming, peaceful, and soothing. As she gazed deep into them, Marcasite was filled with those Blue feelings and quickly forgot her post- Green feelings and thoughts. She ran to the top of the elders' tree and told them of her experience. She told them of her blue eyes and how they had saved her. The elders nodded their heads in agreement; another elf had been saved in their moment of greatest need by their gift, even the one who believed the least.

Never again did Marcasite have to look upon clover eyes, and she went back to her schooling, excelling in mind reading, another gift of the elven people, for she was, after all, born within the canopy of the Tree of Foresight.

Pomegranate Winks

by Whitnee

-

I painted

The skies' cheeks

With pomegranate juice

It bleeds a fusion purple-red

On my palms

And seeping deep

Into my core

Of spread-like oak tree limbs

Tracing

Letters impressed

On your trust

In-between the moment when

Life winks

And

I smile.

Their Skirts
by Whitnee

Under the vine of grapes

That curled around

My face

God's breath lingered

On my lips

They say that spirits dance

Two step tangos

Between terraces

After nights of sipping

The wine slow

Celebrating their death

I have never seen them

But on nights

That are alive

So alive

That I can hear heartbeats

In my ears

I sink my body deep

Into the twisted green

Hoping

To feel their

Skirts as they tango by.

Cracking The Sky
by Whitney

We cracked the sky like an egg

Letting the yolk

Run down

Horizons

And off God's sketch pad

He didn't mind too much

Luckily

But we realized that the line

We crossed from reality

To surreal unconscious streams

Could never be walked again

At least by us

We knew too much

I don't think we planned it that way

We wanted to return

But the swirls of our Technicolor dreams

Seemed too close to leave

So we reached

And kept on reaching

Up Up Up

Running our fingertips on the backside

Of the world's hopes

Down the spine of her ambitions

Settling on timeless faith

Until time had no place in our lives

And all that was known and loved

By us

Forgotten.

Who Knew Her Eyes

by Becky

who knew her eyes

were grey and light blue

underneath all of

that brown.

when the sun stops

whisking her away

(like chalk floating

off of a blackboard)

the brown will melt into

hand-held chocolate which

looks like m&m's and

holiday wishes.

it smells like easy-bake-cookies

and drops notes like a jazz band

focusing on an evening

when everything's changing.

the blue and grey

(soft like beluga whales

and hope hidden under

wishing pillows)

works down through her

hips and seeps into

her toes.

it becomes the toenail polish,
the turquoise skirt she
stole from her sister, slung low.

it becomes her walk,
her snowman pitter-patter
echoing through the wood grain
of the floors.

and when she falls asleep
at night she soaks all the
color up from the world and
holds it between her hands
and her stomach until the
sun rises sunny side up
in morning windows.