

“MY POCKETS RAN DEEP AND SO I FILLED IT MYSELF”

Pax Ledina

My love glistens in the after-morning sun.
It runs like a river across my skin,
Stretching out for miles upon miles—
Leaping over the edge of *maybes* and *almosts*.

In the middle of the night,
It fills the spaces between my fingers.
Wraps it around like a warm embrace
Lulling my second-hand anxieties to sleep.

On some days, my reflection looks at me funny.
Like I had just spilled a ketchup packet on my beige tote.
Or had I worn my button-down shirt the wrong way?
Even then, it cannot help but lift the side of its lips into a smile.

This was not always the case.
For a while, I thought change came from a stranger's applause.
Like I was an empty pocket waiting for a couple of coins to trickle down.
My chain of keys clinking and clanking with each stride I take.

But now I have learned to take my precious time,
Draping myself down a wooden staircase.
Drifting gracefully like sheer embroidered curtains.

Melting into the cracks and crevices as I float down the hallway.

It is now the way my heart flutters like butterfly wings

Or how still everything looks after the dust has settled.

It has become the picture of peace I hold close to me

Every time I look in the mirror.