

CutBank

Volume 1
Issue 3 *CutBank* 3

Article 8

Spring 1974

History

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Recommended Citation

Lopes, Mike (1974) "History," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 3 , Article 8.

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HISTORY

The touchlessness of dream: skin sleeps,
muscles walk in their sleep, legs thrash
like a whale's tail, salty water oozes out.

Pools of blood, a bus to the South,
missed appointments, unexpected authority figures.

You shoot at a mountain lion and miss.
You shoot at a deer and miss.
The warden asks to see your license.

The scene shifts: a woman, prone, her head
a ball of curls in a reddish pool—
au jus, not blood, but still you know
she's dead: the jagged cleft.

No stairs; no elevator; one window, locked.
Trapped—and then you are at the bus station,
waiting; then you are in the mesquite canyon,
holding a rifle. This is how to shoot, you say,
nodding to your female companion. Blam! you
miss the lion. Blam! you miss the deer.

Your skin wakes first, the sheets are dry,
the warden's lecture throbs a minute in your ears,
your muscles loosen. It was all a dream, you think,
then start to write this down.