

# The Oval

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## The Library

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## ***THE LIBRARY***

EMMIE BRISTOW

Books with brown pages like moon  
dust sleep on the shelves. Hundreds,  
thousands, millions resting with spines  
straight as a pianist's,

but a silent pianist's, whose fingers  
press empty keys.

The silence swallows even the whispers  
down the isle—swallows them up  
like a black hole, leaving only silence.

Only the light has the right to make a buzz.

There's something about that old book smell.  
There's something about wanting to hear  
voices like a schizophrenic—hear the background  
of a Gatsby party or an Alice tea party  
echoing between the cracks of books  
filling the still, suffocating air with crazy laughter.

Haha! listen to the way these books  
creak when slid from the shelf!  
Look at their dark letters burned  
into the pages, kept pressure-  
shut between two covers!

Listen to that music! Look  
at that beauty, lost in this void!  
This void filled with nocturnal  
eyes, wide with empty feelings  
while staring at laptop screens!

I hope to never be a librarian-  
astronaut stuck in this black hole.