

CutBank

Volume 1
Issue 12 *CutBank* 12

Article 20

Spring 1979

Honeymoon

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Recommended Citation

Kloefkorn, William (1979) "Honeymoon," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 12 , Article 20.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss12/20>

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HONEYMOON

1

We spend the better part
of the opening hours
counting our toes.

Everything must be at least perfect,
if not normal.

Doris wants another glass of juice.
We will begin again, counting.

I have never not been within a snapshot
of Niagara Falls:
it is the underbelly of a rock back home
that I can't imagine.

Doris assumes the shape of a pasture.
Clouds begin slowly to form.
A raindrop, then,
amazes the eye of the beholder.

Yes yes yes.
Keep your shirt on, Howard.
Everything is going to be all right.

Doris cannot imagine
that all that she imagines
might not be.

Her eyes in daylight are awash
with the unadulterated flow
of playthings.

2

So much so that at night,
Doris asleep,
the candle barely burning,
I can see their shapes myself
struggling against the ceiling.

That one there, I whisper, pointing,
is our first child, forming.

Listen:
it is here already in the bed between us.
Listen:
you can almost hear it breathing.

3

This morning I can see more clearly
the shape of the first child,
its head now a shadowed indentation
on the pillow.

It is a boy—no, a girl.

I am at the bedside.

It's a girl, Doris says.

With one finger she nudges gently
at the indentation.

I see my own life in the eyes of the child.

I am growing up all over again,
the ages a heavy door, revolving.

There are too many things
yet to be done, to have changed, to be changing.

Doris, I say, wake up!

It is time for the honeymoon to begin.

4

I go into the haymow with Doris
into sunslants festive with dust.

Doris fills all those gaps between her teeth
with splinters of hay.

We lie long and warm on our backs,
haybales for pillows.

Doris reaches back to pluck a wire:
music swells the head, a cacophony.

Doris is so godawful beautiful
I want to touch her.

She takes my hand and guides it
along the softness of her sweater.

The splinters of hay taste sweet almost
as sorghum.

As if wingshot,
a swallow dips from a rafter.

We are dying in the haymow year after year,
unable to control the bleeding.