

4-30-2018

## Laid to Rest

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### Recommended Citation

Larkin, Luke (2018) "Laid to Rest," *The Oval*: Vol. 11 : Iss. 2 , Article 4.  
Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/oval/vol11/iss2/4>

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# laid to rest.

by luke larkin

“Lilies? Really?” From her place in the casket, my sister clicks her tongue. “So typical. I was expecting something with more flair. Like snapdragons! You don’t see snapdragons at many funerals, now do you?”

I stand at the lectern and do my best to ignore her, but she does her damndest to be heard.

“Were you the one that invited Aunt Clem? No, that had to be Mom’s doing, she knows how much I hate the woman. Remember when Clem gave me her hand-me-down earrings for my twentieth birthday? What kind of twenty-year-old wears pearls? They weren’t even real. The nerve of that woman.”

Aunt Clem scoffs. She gathers her purse and shawl and storms out the rear doors.

“And don’t think I haven’t seen the tombstone.” She jabs a bony finger at me. It rises from the narrow bed like a gnarled root. “It’s just a rectangle with my name and a date. Where’s the epitaph? I deserve an epitaph, don’t you think? There’s more than enough material for one,

God knows. *Beloved* has a nice ring, but also maybe something stronger. *Cherished. Revered!*”

I reach the portion of my eulogy in which I honor her humility, but decide to trim it.

“I hope Moira cries a lot, considering all I’ve done for her. None of this snuffle business. I want sobs. Not everyone gets to lose a sister like me.”

In the front row, Moira’s face remains stony.

“You did alright with the coffin, I’ll give you that. Cushy. Mahogany.” She nods her approval and her pale face bobs on the silk pillow. “But I think my toes touch the top. Not much, but just—”

Mom stands and slams the coffin lid shut, and I don’t bother with the rest of my speech. It’s mostly bullshit, anyway.



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by luke larkin