

# CutBank

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Volume 1  
Issue 55 *CutBank* 55

Article 18

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Spring 2001

## Pomona

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### Recommended Citation

Simmons, Glori (2001) "Pomona," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 55 , Article 18.

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**POMONA**

This is me crawling back, child of cold linoleum and haystacks.  
By headlight, my father hurled your bales  
To buy the carburetor and gas as my mother bulged.

You were never the perfect bride—  
Too often you tasted of barn loft cider.  
Too often your pruning lessened the seasonal gods.

I went to church every Sunday for you,  
Waking to the smell of stove fire in my hair.

City where the white Ford stalled,  
City of children reaching for cereal boxes from shopping carts,  
City of forked roads,

There is a rental house lodged in my heart, a shepherd  
On a short tether, sheets hovering over lawns of lopped  
    dandelions—  
Their milky stalks.

In your lap I memorized the scripture of my hands  
And learned to kick the dog.

You are the myth left behind:  
A green suitcase, the Siamese slinking into my crib,  
The .45 hidden between mattresses.

From the porch an old woman reinvents the lie to marry you  
    off  
As a girl in the distance cries behind laundry lines.  
In your prodigal orchards there are no birds.

The people migrate from your acred hands  
In rusted trucks headed north.