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## "Demerits," "Sapphics on Sado Island," "Parenthetic Hours," "Child's Play" and "Wind, Thirteen Ways" (poems)

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ellipsis

## Demerits

RILEY BINGHAM

*Ryan Chighizola Memorial Scholarship 2012*

Crush a salve from her personal scent  
on your pillow. The bitter paste in sounds  
sorted how she'd let them out. Snort.

Make a course of your  
acoustics and thresholds.

Try a sit-up mat, miles, hard covers, time  
to be silent. Greens or an ambient lens  
or a blanket or a TV set. White noise.  
Eastern philosophy. Waiting.

To the narrow pool of earnest  
friends, you are a Greek fire fleck,  
singeing their smiling depths,  
attentive brows, and offered beers.

Proper layers for the cold.

Indiscreet bourbon. Paternal advice:  
“...that endings and suffering  
extensive burns make our bodies  
and systems react the same way.”

On your back in the winter yard,  
arming out a snow phoenix. Melt.  
Pool and evaporate.

ellipsis

## Sapphics on Sado Island

RILEY BINGHAM

*Ryan Chighizola Memorial Scholarship 2012*

Shoals spit down the coastline. Buried, a salty  
bottle of malts and foamy ocean backwash.  
Ocean neighs of green, fused to the thunderhead,  
playing a wave down.

Knee cap, hamstring. Water levels still creeping.  
Equilibrium is bashful. Thickened dunes.  
Waist deep. Shoulders. Slack neck eyes up, following  
loving the sea cats.

Bubbles from the packed grain. Jellyfish are clouds.  
Webbing full of sand, the calloused heel cracks shells.  
Slow return to land. Leave and brush against the  
drying sunshine.

ellipsis

## Parenthetic Hours

RILEY BINGHAM

*Ryan Chighizola Memorial Scholarship 2012*

Laundry only on her clothesline  
shoulders, she ascends the polished  
staircase in the wane of winter-

stunted light hours. Spurts  
a whistle, no notes missed

or hit. Imbalance of the bones. A flush,  
seat up, held breath. Hot showerhead. Slam.

Slam. Nighttime dragonfly versus bright  
steamed panes. In freshly skinned elbows,

suds. On her wide, white foam slab, limbs fanned  
like a fossil, I count breaths, my imbalanced  
bones. Hi-res

morning blind-filtered onto shadowy  
cheeks. Sparrows, measures of rests,  
on the power line peek in.  
Imbalanced bones.

I break eggs and carry  
our frames down the steps.  
She holds the wheels.

ellipsis

## Child's Play

RILEY BINGHAM

*Ryan Chighizola Memorial Scholarship 2012*

Only when the white cab's door pops open is my breath calm and dry.  
The leather seat is clean is pride. My calm eyes  
pop open once inside. Once moving I open the briefcase  
an ocean. Best I lie down on the seat. An empire  
my chest rises. An inky monotone. I wonder is the safety  
flipped in the briefcase under the note written in two rote columns  
command, name.

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The driver breaks my giddy hush. "Yes" despite the traffic stay our dim  
course on this old highway. On the Precambrian shoulder  
a forest sedan is pulled over flashing yellow.  
Who picks their saviors by survey anyways. Will the world bellow  
when he dies? The leather seat is clean its demersal blue shines  
even in this night. I picture his breath  
popped open. My eyes are calm and dry. Who likes to think about duty.  
An order spliced with a cautious promise of freedom. K M

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## Wind, Thirteen Ways

RILEY BINGHAM

*Ryan Chighizola Memorial Scholarship 2012*

1. Fedoras, gusted off heads on distant,  
empty Frenchmen.

2. Elegiac sounds, like grown-up fireworks,  
peal and echo for blocks  
and blocks,  
breezed aloft.

3. Buffeting entirety of cityscape, from leaning,  
guttered eaves,  
to scores-wide southern acres, raised and lazy.

4. If I were to trudge, it would  
speed me to a stroll at my back,  
an optimistic, urging,  
persistent parent.

5. Everywhere on our block is down-  
wind, and that cat's been  
dead for five days already.

6. *[Blown to Oz.]*

ellipsis

7. Ash and ember stream from a cracked window  
speeding down the highway  
ahead.

8. Monroe, exposed.

9. Wanting wind's hold,  
while sleeping under smiling elementals.

10. Fifteen thousand whirling windmills,  
somewhere.

12. Waves of wind rejuvenate me.

I stand before it, in it, balconied.

The city huddles in its homes.

13. Wind roams, and roams, cheered  
beers foam and the world

is loam, tilled smooth  
by Miles Davis and wind.