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

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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.
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.
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.
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 entireties 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.]
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.

13. Wind roams, and roams, cheered
    beers foam and the world
    is loam, tilled smooth
    by Miles Davis and wind.

The city huddles in its homes.