Südtirol

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Recommended Citation
DOI: https://doi.org/10.46428/ejail.43.13
Available at: https://scholarworks.uno.edu/ellipsis/vol43/iss1/13

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Südtirol

Lauren Burgess

Ryan Chighizola Prize Winner

The bottom of a massive geological bowl
that wanted to keep me like the last Werther’s
in grandma’s dish:
this is where green comes from.
This is where mountains like widespread fingers
hold forests speckled with castles
and brightness. Striking

the dichotomy of Alpine green
and blue: unreachable, halting
vastness,

visible for the tormented joy of the ingested
who see birds leave over peaks,
who wonder if they taste the slightest humidity
on their black tongues. Wonder
from the base of the greatest stomach

where I sat with chickens
in the vineyard,
ate berries off trees,
hiked barefoot,
and learned a good deal
about the functionality
of Poundian economics
and the history of farming equipment.
I wrote some

in my broom-closet-dorm.
The desk touched the bed
and the bed touched the closet.

The window shrunk
when I looked to the seeming peristalsis
of the lush and thought about the chickens.