

THE WINNERS OF THE 2013 RICHARD PETERSON  
POETRY PRIZE, JACK DYER FICTION PRIZE, AND  
JOHN GUYON LITERARY NONFICTION PRIZE

2013 RICHARD PETERSON  
POETRY PRIZE WINNER

Three Poems by Rochelle Hurt  
(Chapel Hill, North Carolina)



2013 JACK DYER  
FICTION PRIZE WINNER

“Ten Thousand Dollars”  
by Dale Gregory Anderson  
(Minneapolis, Minnesota)



2013 JOHN GUYON  
LITERARY NONFICTION PRIZE WINNER

“Compound, Fracture”  
by Natalie Vestin  
(Saint Paul, Minnesota)



*Rochelle Hurt*

## **In Only, Tennessee**

Tell me how he held his gun, girl—the only  
grip steady enough to lift your skirt  
by the same angle your stepfather worked  
the day he pointed your mother's face to the sky,  
anchored you on his back, and left her  
neck craned in prayer, mouth cocked,  
their only baby suckling the bullet inside.

The only conclusion you could come to  
about Tennessee men: don't let them  
touch you, a lesson learned only after  
that first pretty boy pushed through—  
he like an auger, and you with that hole

in your icy chest, from which any number  
of slippery dreams could be pulled, gutted,  
and slapped in the skillet to hiss beneath  
the wooden spoons of your mother, despairing  
in their pitcher on your lonely stove—your only  
son born like a beautiful scab on the wound.

## **Infants of the Field**

*Stories of rescuers finding small children alive after  
tornadoes have carted them off have become so common  
as to seem apocryphal.*

—Patrik Jonsson, *Christian Science Monitor*

The wind has wanted to keep you as promised things,  
captured and slung from the trees like giftling skins

on the hunting rack in the yard, your fathers' animal  
anger for all to see, a heap of sour evenings—

mothers trapped like starlings, wanting the world  
through a window, and how a creek behind a house

always looks cheap like cellophane with the knowledge  
that it dries up a mile down. No one has loved you

like the earth in its lupine fits, its precious jaw, steel hinge  
of wind, the vapor tongue, only wanting to raise you

by the neck from your mire of too-soft flesh,  
a miracle cub, pawing at death. No one has swaddled you

tight enough to keep it out, but now the wind  
wills its song from your paralytic mouth—

the catch-all caw of child-fright the neighbors hear  
at night, mistaken in thinking you were gone.

They remember it into the throats of their dinners  
the first time it took more than one bullet, the echo

rattling in the walls as dusk puckered into evening.  
They sing along, layering their animal calls

*Rochelle Hurt*

into a bunting of sun-dried pelts, waving  
over the morning when they find you in the grass, arms

gravel-scrubbed, cheeks rough as salt licks, tiny  
rain clouds of warm breath still suspended above

your pied heads. Storm orphans, they make a home in you  
who escaped the grip of your fathers' disappointment,

you who were spit back like words into the named world,  
the chosen changelings, only a little death-bitten, only a little

wild, those snarl-cries like a hymn half-recognized.