

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.