

Ed Makowski

**Daniel Scooter**

A friend of mine's  
girlfriend  
was always getting talked at  
by men  
while waiting for  
and sitting on  
the bus. At first  
it felt nice

But after every day  
trying to read a book  
or during telephone conversations  
it got old. My friend

didn't mind that other men  
found his woman attractive  
but it bothered him  
that she was uncomfortable,  
an unintended hostage,  
going about her every day.

When the snow melted  
he came home one day  
with a brand new scooter.  
Her favorite color. Said,

“Here babe. Now you won’t  
have to ride the bus for awhile.”

He told me about his plan  
to do this  
a few weeks ahead, but  
I figured it was just bar talk  
and didn’t take it seriously.

The following winter  
he died in a nighttime  
calamity of heart attack, tucked in  
like a forever sleeping baby.

I just walked past that scooter  
parked in front of their house.

I wonder, watching the street lamp glisten  
across the still shining paint  
how people will feel  
when they look at

what I  
leave with them  
someday.

## Lutheran Country

I remember the only  
black teacher I ever had  
before college

Forgot about her entirely  
until the other day  
somebody mentioned Mardi Gras

She was at our school  
as a student teacher  
only a few weeks  
but it was the most fun day of 3rd grade,  
learning about Fat Tuesday, the  
binge and excess and  
dropping and stomping on doubloons  
while listening to music  
and dancing, and eating  
beignet donuts, then the Ash Wednesday  
Lenten cleansing of  
going back to other teacher's classes.

The last time I saw her  
I'd left class for the bathroom  
and she was trudging down the hallway  
crying furiously, too engorged with anguish  
for me to ask what was the matter  
her high heels clattering unrhythm  
I stood my hands hanging at my sides  
as she walked past our  
hanging book bags

Now I remember her and think  
She could have been  
any one of those details  
young or Southern  
or from Voodoo New Orleans  
or beautiful or black  
or full of song and dancing,

But all of them at once,  
all of her at once  
was too much  
celebration

## Warning Shot

The rattlesnake evolved  
portions of it's tail  
to possess hard scales  
attached to muscles which shake  
50 times per second,  
alerting other animals  
who they do not desire for lunch  
of their deadly venom

After centuries of this

arms-length alert

and humans responding  
with shovelheads, shotguns,  
and machetes,

snakes with operational rattles  
are leaving the gene pool  
and snakes with non-functioning tails  
are procreating.

When those snakes rattle  
their tails have no voice  
and they strike  
in silence.

Humans took a creature  
kind enough to warn us  
and made them more  
dangerous  
to ourselves

## Tadpole

My six year old told me  
that my dad is a tadpole.  
He told me precisely,  
“Your dead dad is a tadpole.”

My father wasn't a very humorous man  
and I don't have a lot of humor  
about a person  
who I took  
many times to the bathroom  
but never fishing.

I responded  
with irritation  
that I had no idea  
what he was saying

and he explained  
that my dead dad is a tadpole  
in a river  
waiting to  
turn into a frog, who will

hop into the forest  
so we can pick him up  
and hold him  
and pet him  
and give him kisses  
the next time we're in the woods  
looking for a deer  
to catch  
together