

Riley H. Welcker

## **The Undying Love of a Dying Snicker**

She laughed and giggled as she took me in her hand and dashed toward the garden gate and opened it and burst inside and glanced about to see that we were all alone.

She listened. Satisfied, she smiled at me, peeled back my plastic wrapper, leaving me half naked to the sun, and gazed on me behind the ivy wall. She lifted me

to die upon the violet dips of her full lovely lips. The place where lovers meet is never quite as secret as you think. The gardener clipped the hedge beside us,

breaking our embrace. I fell into her livid orange flesh that bloomed bright red in her surprise. She raced toward the trellis, my right arm dangling far behind, my left arm battered by her bracelet. I cannot say I did not love it. I admit the truth.

Our love was murder to her body, a violent danger to her health. I felt the weight of it, the rolls, the pounds. I knew as well, that it would only end in death

for me. Although death was not a fear  
I felt—I longed for it upon her lips—  
I feared what it would do to her frail frame,  
destroy the body of my love, destroy

our lovers' game. My love could only harm  
her figure, love would only ever shame.  
I could not love her if I loved her. I  
could not have ever loved her if I died

to satisfy her love. She held me close.  
I heard her pump sack beat within her breast.  
I felt the warmth of her tight squeeze, the thrill,  
and suddenly she lifted me. I flew.  
Rising higher, ever higher, I  
stared down the pit between her collar blades.

We hid together, she and I, inside  
a trellis hall, a great gazebo made  
of trellises buried under ivy,  
poison ivy, wild grape, Virginia creeper,

netting vines and leaves so fierce and thick  
we were entirely hidden from all eyes.  
She sat cross-legged in the dirt beside  
a cedar bench and looked at me and smiled

as I fell in her lap. She looked around  
again. She spied out our surroundings,  
leaned forward from her hips and rocked and swayed,  
until she sealed all possibilities

that we might be discovered where we were,  
buried in the arms of our gazebo cave,  
well hidden from the warmth and light of day,  
crouched together, wrapped in deep, dark, secret  
love, our love as violent as a storm,  
as rich and zesty as a chocolate orange.

I dangled from her fingers as she  
lifted me up in her arms, her shoulders  
curled around me, the smells of cedar, peat moss,

moldy cloth, and downy dryer sheets

thick and heavy. I moved past that dark mole  
at her neck, moved past her chin, her mouth,  
to meet her aching, arching eyes, those eyes  
as blue as the inside of shattered quartz.

Then slowly she brought me toward her lips  
again. Her breath was stilled. I felt her pause,  
her lift, her lips collected. I trembled,  
wanting her as much as she me. Knowing

I must refuse. Knowing, if I did not,  
I would ruin her forever. I would  
obliterate the figure of my love.  
I would be the cause of her digression.  
No don't! I touched her lips. Don't do it. No!  
Her hand stopped. I dropped. Stilled. Silent.

A noise, a ticklish sort of noise, like feet  
on gritty pavement or a rusty wheelbarrow,  
broke our singularity. She listened  
as she waited. In her hands, I quivered

wistfully. I craved her clutch. I craved  
to trace her lips and die upon her mouth.  
I craved her touch like polish wants its wood,  
like a grape desires to be broken

open, like a shiver yearns the north wind,  
like the stars that pierced the darkness of our  
hiding place, that pierced those violent vines,  
our secret love, our mutual ecstasy.

A hoe, a rake, or something, struck the ground  
two feet beside the trellis. We were found.  
She sprang onto her feet. She jumped so fast,  
I tumbled through the air and smacked the earth  
and crumpled where I lay. I saw the last of her—  
heels that darted from our pinpricked cavern.

Swallowed by the vastness of that garden  
palace, struck down, shattered, silent, still,  
with peat moss in my face, I tried to cheer  
myself. I tried to say that it was good

that she was finally gone. I tried to laugh.  
I missed her fiercely. In my caramel,  
I lied. I loved the way she loved me.  
But even as I dreamt of being held

by her again, I knew that I had made  
the greater sacrifice, the sacrifice  
to live, to live and let her leave me.  
I never did a single thing that I  
could say that ever hurt my gorgeous love.

It rained. A foot pitched dirt. It rainbowed me.  
A hand swooped down and carefully retrieved  
my mangled form and saved me from the peat moss.  
My insides gave a leap, believing it  
was she. But no. It was the gardener.

And here he tossed me on the shelf, to die  
anyway, in this infernal cedar shed,  
this sweltering cedar coffin, buried in  
burlap beside all of you ugly nuts.