
POETRY | SPRING 2015

Dear Stephanie, It Made Sense

By Hannah Baggott

to put us together—the university sorting out
freshmen like a matching game. We were cards
with the same disorder. I didn't know pain yet,

but you complained about it all the time,
sitting in your desk chair facing the wall.
I didn't want to turn the lights out

at 7 pm, but you'd sigh, huff hard breaths
from your tensed face. I couldn't argue.
You'd get up early—start straightening

your hair as I shuffled out of bed to stake out
for coffee. You'd still be straightening
when I got back, and I hated you.

Hated that you never wanted to leave our room,
that you never stopped talking about high school,
about *your* pain. I thought about cutting

off your ponytail in your sleep, but instead,
when you were out of town, my sister filled
your shampoo with hand soap. I don't know

if you noticed, but one day, you screamed at me—
If you put your stuff on my shelf again, I'll take the fridge out.
I quaked, *Take the goddamn fridge, then.* You left

before the semester ended, and for years, I couldn't place
you. You were just a good bad roommate story to tell.
But today, the nerves in my legs caught fire;

I heaved heavy tears in bed until the pills kicked in.
And I thought of you: how bitter you must've been
with your nerves, daydreaming about Paducah flag-twirling.

And I was just a taunt—everything you couldn't do.
Do you remember when I came in our room excited
about some boy, and you shrugged?

Nothing ever turns out right. You tightened
your mouth, turned away from me. So I left you
in the dark. You're still there,

five years later—your nerves worn
away too early. I didn't understand
that we were the same card—

I was just the twin flipped second.

Hannah Baggott is a Nashville, TN native currently pursuing an MFA in poetry at Oregon State University. She has recently been awarded the 2015 Bellevue Literary Review Marcia and Jan Vilcek Prize for Poetry. Her work can be found in Tupelo Quarterly, Stockholm Review of Literature, Open Minds Quarterly, Contrary Magazine, and on her website, www.hannahbaggott.com.