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Peer reviewed|Undergraduate

BRITTNEY KNAUF
THREE POEMS



THE VERNAL POOL

ISSUE TWO, SPRING 2015

The Clocks Start to Melt

After Salvador Dali's 'The Persistence of Memory'

Bill got laid off, so we're all working late.
Steve's been here awhile, so he's gone through this
before. "You know how, at three,
time starts moving slower?" he asks.
"Well, at five, the clocks start to melt."
I laughed. I stapled three hundred
documents, made photocopies, sent faxes,
and made myself a slave to the boss lady.
Sitting at the computer task after task,
the glare hurt. We made more coffee.

Five came, and sure enough the clocks were
melting. By seven, I was on a beach and there
was one hanging off a tree and one clinging lazily
to the edge of my desk.

The Bus

I rode the bus home. I
looked up from my book
and took out a fine-toothed black
comb that brushed the dandruff
from a girl's hair.

I wished I could shampoo it.

I went shopping and I was
alone – women
on the other side of the aisle
didn't see when I waved at them.
I smiled. "That wouldn't look good
on you." *Nothing!*

Sometimes I wish I could sit
with a book and take the bus,
or sit in a café. Sometimes
I wish I could just watch
like the light bulb
that lives in a dome glass case.

First Day

Silent flashes of striking light
speckle the room, speckle
the girl's new white
curves; the pole is stagnant
as a headstone for an empty coffin.
She is a mouse to the hawks'
pivoting eyes as she spins,
like the sound of an empty room.

The others darken circles of experience
under their eyes that allow them to smile
and step up and ask. They are as haggard
as their regulars who sit like businessmen,
watching the window of yet another plane.

A man pays extra and, like the lone
caught fish, the girl is taken; her eyes
blank and nostalgic for the water.