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Peer reviewed|Undergraduate

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THE GOLDEN LOCKET



THE VERNAL POOL

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The Golden Locket

It's been six months since anybody has even looked at me. My neighbors are as lonely as I am. We are equally old, equally darkened, and equally forgotten. It has been too long since a chest has warmed my back, too long since golden hair entangled me, and too long since somebody called me their treasure.

*

She held me close. "I love you. I love you. I love you." She repeated my words back to me. Sometimes they fell from her as a sigh, a quiet whisper of a future wish. Other times it was nothing but a question on innocent lips. Most people forget my words just as easily as they read them. She didn't. She held me close.

*

It was cold and I was covered in dirt. I lay beaten in the earth, crushed beneath the boots of worn fathers and the sneakers of deviant youths. The horn of the early morning train shook me to the surface. This is where her father found me.

*

The tarnished bells on the door moan as a tired woman enters, a small child clinging to her like the January cold outside. The frail girl finds me once she is shaken from her mother's coat tails and, as she holds my gaze, I feel beautiful for the first time in too long. Her golden hair reminds me of the one who left me here. Has she said my words to another?

*

She was older the next time I was placed in her hands. She had forgotten me. She would still repeat my words to me but her tone was bitter, brimming with disbelief. She had learned that the words engraved into my skin were so often destructive. She once wore me close to her heart; but those days have long since been lost. Her father is gone and she has sold me to a stranger.