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The Vernal Pool

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Peer reviewed|Undergraduate

Polished
By Camryn Melanson

White nail polish feels like you;
Purity meets sex appeal,
and suddenly I'm a woman.

Before I met you, I owned one bottle of nail polish,
pinky mauve and glossy like licked lips.
I wore it twice a year to Sundays with Oma
and sometimes on nights when I felt like reinventing myself.

I can still see you extending your fingertips
to show me the bottle in your palm:
"Eggshell White".

Stolen nail polish was our version of flowers,
a love letter made of colors
and I'd melt each time.

After 8 months I had a spectrum of colors with no receipts;
I had pinks and nudes as pale as untouched skin,
sweet blue shades that turned grey softens the night,

dark reds that took the words I wanted to say
out of my mouth and into my gut,

I had a shade like yellow,
you used to call me sunshine.

Some nights I look at my collection

but my hands will only reach for you.

My bottle of Eggshell White is going empty now

I still reach for you.