

# 2014MCC Creative Writing Contest

## Fiction Category

First Place: "Peace of Më" by Rachel Gilbert

"Dumb bitch, I said no ketchup." His shouts echo in the hollows of my mind as I numbly reach for his dinner plate. He slaps my hand away. "Leave it!"

"Sorry," I say, my voice a whisper.

"Sorry?" He turns in his chair. A scowl draws his eyebrows into a deep "W" "Work my ass off, you feed me this shit, and all you can say is sorry!"

In one quick move, he snatches his dinner plate from the table then sends it sailing across the room.

Shatter.

My body jerks. Ketchup and mustard confetti the wall to my immediate right, red and yellow smear together to make vibrant orange...a lovely sunrise, I close my eyes.

The sun warms my skin. Sealed air kisses my lips. My lashes flutter open. I stare over the expanse of the crystal clear gulf. Smooth like glass. Ie

another, “Notice the perfection of the etching, the symmetry of each line, beautifully crafted despite the small fractures.”

“I agree,” the other responds, his outstretched hand covers mine. “Not living, yet, so full of spirit.”

Yes, I think. My spirit livens at the gentle touch. His fingers move to stroke my arm, I marvel in him—his caress...my body slams against the wall, head bounces off the paneling. With shaky fingers I reach to touch the point of impact to find my hair matted in ketchup and mustard.

“Do I have to do every damn thing myself?” He hovers in front of me, arm cocked.

I collapse to floor. Shattered glass grates my knees. My hands scoured by the shards I recoil, pressing them to my chest.

“Please.” I cry.

Crunch. Glass grinds into the floorboards under his weight. He bends down, gathers the hair at the nape of my neck then jerks back.

I yelp.

“Stop your fucking crying.” He uses my hair as a leash and yanks me from the ground then drags me to the kitchen sink.

Portions of hair tug free of my scalp, hundreds at a time ripped from their follicles, strands of blond-brown hair fall like dead leaves around me. My cries intensify. I arch back to release the tension of his hold. But he slams me forward. My fingers fold over the edge of the stainless steel sink. I cling to the counter for support as his grip loosens from my mane. My chin drops to my chest.

Tufts of condiment soaked hair lay scattered in the sink. Pieces of me. Torn.

“I’m going to get a real dinner,” he says already on the other side of the room. “You better have this mess cleaned up by the time I get back.”

The door bangs shut. I watch as he slides behind the wheel of his pickup then backs down the driveway and out of sight.

