

# Lamplight

Connor Poff

I sleep with your lamp at my bedside—  
the one whose base is a vintage milk jug,  
ceramic, from before vintage things were called vintage  
and milk jugs were all made with plastic—  
the one with the shade that you made from spare bedsheets,  
ripped then re-stitched into something new. Yes,  
little slivers of you are perched on my floorboards  
and in my dresser drawers. You fill my halfway home,  
the rented property I am only meagerly bound to.  
Granny tells me that you, too, were a renter—  
not a homeowner ‘til past forty. And that is hope at least,  
hope at the fact that you spent your youth  
surviving and your adulthood saving, stowing away  
for your own glass castle: the ancient farmhouse at the end  
of Leichy (say it Lick-tee) Avenue. And you gave Granny  
that middle name, Hope, and I can’t help but wonder  
if that was your hope or hers, and if it should be mine,  
or if all our hope is the same, intertwined. And I wonder  
if there is a house at the end of a lane with my name  
written over it, waiting for me to arrive and do my own  
renovations, lay my generation’s version of shag carpet  
and marigold linoleum, then rest over it in wingback chairs  
and atop king mattresses and write poems by lamplight at night  
until I run out of rhymes and words, and I die, too, same as you.