Final Portfolio

Ode to My Trumpet

I want to stare

into your brassy

triumphant bell.

I want to hear

you bellow and roar

into the stadium seats

enchanting the crowd.

Your raspy airy thunder

imprints on the evening

defining the vibrance of the night.

Your howls

light up the deepest of grays

Your lacquer

shines bright - like a nickel - in my hand

I want dance to the grace

of your timber and pride.

You’re my Timothy.

My roaring thunder.

My Best Friend.

Timothy's Death

The whirl of the wind
tore my heart to shreds,
spreading the scent
of freshly fried Oreo's and chilly cheese fries.

The bright green of the field

and the blue of my marching suit
blinded my vision of the kid.

He jumped from the bleachers.
I watch one frame at a time,
Timothy's beautiful brass bell bend
The cheering and roar of the crowd silenced
each crack of his lacquer - pop of his welds.

Oh your old sweat, luscious sound.
Perfect no more!
You stand strong and bold
even today!
But never the same as before.

My Trumpet, Timothy, lived with me for so long. A young boy crushed him at a football game four years ago and he never healed from the bends.

Robert’s lisp

Was he a silent child,

or loud? Did his siblings

ignore him as a kid?

Did they read to him, teach

him how to squirm and scream? Did

other six years try to help him?

Or did he sit

thrashing through thoughts?

Did they watch his blue eyes

fill with tears at night? Or did

he sit alone, crying over

the pain his speech

has caused him.?

And did you feel yourself

fighting for his every word,

wanting to understand

why he was unlike the others?

Did his short stocky self

keep you from helping?

Did fixing the tooth gaps

cross your mind?

Did you ever think

about specialists? Did you think

about therapy? lacking funds.

Did you feel sorrow?

And for whom?

His Father

Two more cans hit the ground as he calls

Boy come here!

The scent of bourbon and smoke

turn my stomach and the room fills with the musk

of testosterone.

Twelve cans lie on the ground.

Bud Light drips from their tabs

as another cracks open.

He takes another sip.

*Hurry up boy, I ain’t got all day*

I tiptoed across the floor avoiding needles

and sandwich baggies of cocaine.

Looking towards those cold dead eyes,

my defensive side took over.

One long blow after another,

my nine-year-old legs give out.

I just lay on the ground

And he just chuckles.

*Stand up*

*and take it like a real man.*

My Stepfather’s House

Forty thousand dollars down.

Every cent gets saved.

Worry lines, wrinkles, and dark purple-ish gray bags

form on my stepdad’s face as he calls the realtors again.

*It's okay Jess. Our turn will come again.*

Fresh coffee brews

as my disabled mother sleeps. My stepfather

dresses himself in the worn clothes.

The gray suit for AMR\*.

The hopefulness for that long-awaited call

fades just as the steam does when he shaves.

A few moments later I awake to the beaten

1990 Toyota Tacoma revving away.

*It's okay Jess. Our turn will come again.*

Another day has ended

and no house to be bought.

He goes to sleep tired.

Dreading tomorrow's let down

when the realtor rejects his proposal

and he works another day’s shift.

*It's okay Jess. Our turn will come again.*

\*American Medical Response, Inc.