

Annabelle

by Brian Michael Barbeito

Jess threw her books on the bed then grabbed a notebook from a shelf and slammed it onto a writing table. It made a hard pop gunshot sound. Flinging open the book, a page tore. Her diaries were named Annabelle. It was with a blue felt tip pen that she wrote:

Jimmy left me. No matter. I already decided that I will always love him end of story.

Jess closed the notebook and threw it. Now it hit the gypsum boards and made a half-hearted gunshot sound. For five minutes she, a transfixed bird, stared out the window. Biting on her lip, Jess grabbed another notebook and slammed it down on the table. Not having the words to articulate her feelings, she began thinking in profanities. At the beginning of this thinking there were different words, all colorful, none catching what she wanted to convey. Then there was only one word, and it described nothing. Thoughts are strange things. Jess saw an image of her English teacher's shoe. Mrs. Pemberton was her name and she had encouraged the writing. What was it she had said?- thought Jess- That there were sparks. And something about a promise. No. Just promise.

Taking a deep breathe, she closed her eyes tightly and then opened them and wrote, doing the best she could.

Dear Annabelle, Jimmy might never come back, but it's in a way all the same to me. One day, a long time from now, I will look like I have moved on. I will have presumed to have dropped the past, and seen the world as a place where people are not meant to be stuck or fixed to a spot or an idea or especially a person. I will know that souls are meant to have different experiences and that though there seems to be dead ends, that nothing is a dead end but a sort of detour and learning. I will be with someone that I was meant to be with. But that will be all on the outside or only on the inside a little bit. I will still love Jimmy and Jimmy and Jimmy. Annabelle, I will love

Jimmy even when I don't love Jimmy any longer. This is my choice and I choose to choose it. So be it. Jess and Jimmy 4ever.

Jess closed Annabelle and sat in the old and torn reading chair. Looking out the window at the autumn trees and the uneasy and overcast sky, she kicked off her shoes. It had been a bad day, she thought, one of the worst yet. There had been a moment of, if not peace, then something approaching non-chaos, while she wrote to Annabelle. But the true turmoil and grief that lived in and about her head and heart could not be assuaged for long. Trying to think of other places and times, always moving here and there in the seat, never quite settled, never arriving at the thought that would quell the psychic weather.

