

King Street Station

by Elizabeth Kate Switaj

Despite the newly bright bricks and the working clock, Cassie couldn't help but take a deep breath before entering King Street Station. She had always tried to hold her breath when her family cut through it on the way to Mariners games but had never succeeded, not even the summer she was disqualified for staying underwater too long at the start of the 50 fly.

This time, she didn't breathe until she passed the Jehovah's Witnesses handing out *The Watchtower*. They had never been there when the station smelled of mildew, feet, and piss. They came with the scent of paint, bleach, and plaster.

When she passed through the mahogany doors into the waiting room, Cassie inhaled again but sharply. The restored ceiling reminded her of Rome, where she and Angie had gone to celebrate leaving the Church of Latter-Day Saints.

—Mormons, she whispered, fuck it.

She was still staring at the ceiling when Angie embraced her from behind.

—You have no idea how glad I am to see you.

—So Salt Lake wasn't great?

—The lake was fine. My family . . . well, you warned me.

—You won't be going back then?

—No, I think my conversion's complete.

The two women held hands as they passed through the Compass Room, discussing where they should have dinner.

—I'm fine as long as they serve booze, said Angie.

Outside, January's first rain had begun.

—And hot drinks, she added.

