

# Strut

*by* Kerri Dinneny

The devil ran in my blood.  
Scars chase each other on my skin.  
One year old, I fell down the stairs in my walker.  
Five years old, I fell out of a tree while convincing my older sister to  
climb  
the outlawed tree.  
At six I rode my bike down the biggest hill in the neighborhood  
flipping over my handlebars, landing me with an imperfect bone  
on my collar.

Your fingers trace the bump, I know its' fascination  
but it was you that made it different.  
I didn't want to look at you looking at it, I marveled at it myself.  
I wanted you to think I was marvelous.

Parking lot, summer heat weighed on each freckled  
and the blood in my veins.  
Your eyes held my forehead because mine held the gravel by the  
curb.  
My fingers rubbed a rock until it was raw with heat and friction.

My grandfather always ate perfectly.  
His thin lips concealed perfect units of food.  
I didn't like what was on my plate.  
I hid my dinner in the garbage can the day before.  
He said, always be neat.

Lying entangled, silent salt swept my cheeks while you slept.  
My feet were cold and our rock bled silence.  
We had chased out melting smiles

making sore blisters. I was scared and scarred you.  
I broke your haloed throne but kept it neat.

