

Limboland

by Kim Conklin

She was a forward-motion girl. She never bothered to learn to walk as a baby. Instead, she stood up and ran.

Her thoughts began with “I can't wait/stand/continue...” at least ten times a day. The rest of the time, she mentally hurried others along.

Now, life was all waiting. There was nothing else she could do, imprisoned by words on paper, a process playing out.

She was stuck in limboland while her fate was being decided. She wasn't scared anymore, but she was tired.

Waiting is exhausting.

Maybe life was nothing but waiting. Hers had seemed to be.

Waiting for the first day of school. A driver's license. A new job. A letter or an email to arrive. Approval.

Waiting for love.

Waiting for “go,” then running until “stop,” or until she collapsed, exhausted.

Maybe the problem was language. The French pass time. The English spend or kill it.

Yesterday, while waiting, she listened to an old man's story about his youngest grandchild. His son and daughter-in-law had given up, stopped hoping for a miracle. Then, a pregnant young woman working in a dollar store had asked: “Do you know anyone who wants a baby?”

Maybe the trick was to stop waiting.

