

# Tuna Casserole

*by* Mark Waldrop

I remember when I pulled in the way the car door sounded  
When it yawned open.  
I think it may need some oil.

In the dress you just bought,  
With one golden flip flop dangling from  
Your big toe --  
The other under the bench, you told me.  
"We'll be having a picnic."

That's when I noticed all your old boyfriends.

I mean I saw them before but they hadn't seemed real to me  
They were like stand-up cut out people. Tommy with his pocket  
watch,  
Javier was leaning on the door to his Mustang.  
He'd had it repainted.  
And then there were others coming out of the trees  
More than I'd have thought.

My arms were full, an over-sized Indian rug for the living room.  
They had always been full but now they were heavy,  
Just like everything else.

"I'll get us some chicken," I said.  
But when I walked toward pale blue door number 138 it never got  
any closer.  
It stretched and lolled open, flopping slow and heavy like the arm  
Of a dead man.

The Earth turned restless under me, pebbles riding the crust like  
tumbleweeds

And I never got any closer.

The last thing was --

The eye watering formaldehyde and pine trees.

It was just like it used to smell back then in my father's office.

Warm and happy

Like tuna casserole.

