

2021

Summer 2020 Three Poems

Follow this and additional works at: https://vc.bridgew.edu/grad_rev

 Part of the [Poetry Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(2021) Summer 2020 Three Poems. *The Graduate Review*, 6, 23-24.

Available at: https://vc.bridgew.edu/grad_rev/vol6/iss1/8

This item is available as part of Virtual Commons, the open-access institutional repository of Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

Copyright © 2021

Summer 2020

Three Poems

JULIE ALDEN CULLINANE
Bridgewater State University

When the Hawks Came

The hot, sick heat descended fast,
too early, with no Spring.
It was the summer that the hawks came,
and made themselves known.

We then took notice
of how little,
we looked up at the sky.

The virus came,
just as we had enough money
to buy the expensive shampoo,
in the green bottle.

Change was instant.
My youth sharply sealed up,
stamped in red wax,
outlined in time's sharp edges.

The babies that we made
so that we wouldn't leave this Earth
without ever knowing true love,
beat their wings
despite captivity.
Their youth indestructible.
They are already gone.

Beware the doors.
The windows are locked.

The sun and air now take sips of your strength
as payment.
The price of admission.

We run for safety,
down the road untraveled,

just as we start using the shampoo
in the green bottle.

Black Coat

You were stark,
in focus,
so clear
against the panoramic
countryside,
and the dawn light.

Standing so still
next to
this wild tree,
its branches twisted and leaning,
as if it was reaching for you.

Your raven hair
defied it with the helping
wind, blowing hard
in the opposite
direction. Your back was
to me.

Just a sharp shape in
black, a stoic statue,
wide leg stance,
smoking a cigarette.

I liked the cut of your
black coat,
A-line
Knee Length/Back
slit, so clean and severe
against the horizon.

Common as Breath

You step smoothly for death.
Softer, aware of heel to toe
pace and placement. Death
is hallway carpets,
muffling any sound that disturbs.

You hush your voice and lungs
for death. Whisper and hold
heavy words in your mouth.
Give them slow release when You
should scream like thunder.

You avert eyes at death.
Look anywhere but right
at it. Look at the floor,
at your shoes. Bow your head
in awed fear and respect.

You hold death
in your hand, alone, like it's
a rare diamond, shocked
at its existence. Yet it is
as common
as breath.

About the Author

Julie Alden Cullinane is a current graduate student at Bridgewater State University, pursuing a Master of English in creative writing. Her poems were created during her time as a student. She eventually plans to pursue a Ph.D. in English or an MFA in English.