Remains
by Heather Griffiths

A thin layer of red dirt washes over my body—
a warm breeze fills my lungs
with incense of pinyon pine.

I watch a tree grow which had long stood dead.

Roots twisted around roots and something no longer there.

Then I saw it.

A small, dried pellet of dark, grey fur and a brittle, pointed claw.

Purged by owl or hawk,

who now carries its blood and muscle with her throughout the desert.

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Vista Verde
by Katie Kingston

Bonilla pulls off on the canyon rim,
his red truck full of discarded aluminum. Sun stains
his neck the color of sky before dawn.

The mandolin of wind shifts its uneasy weight over the gorge. A newspaper unfolds.
The rustle of ink makes the scorpions uneasy.

This is where Bonilla disappeared into juniper with his long-neck bottle of Coors.
A trail through lava fields, the sheen of manganese.

A view opens its pearl eyelid. A river sashays through a country filled with spiders.
Bonilla floats over its green soul like an orphan.

Somewhere, a pool of arsenic.
Somewhere, a pool of cutthroats.

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Ashcan
by Andrew Berthrong

Out a side door, a fat bottomed concrete ashcan squatted at the top of the steps receiving spent cigarettes,
like a rooftop pool into which steaming divers plunge.

The dozen or so butts favored one side, waxing like a moon,
resting their charred heads on the cool sand, put out as if to pasture.

How good it is that none were out there alone, that the smokers, in their thoughtless, winter hurry, grew the just-kissed crowd.
And good, especially, that they do it instinctively, that the empty hemisphere remains empty,
as if warning against solitude, as if this hissing gesture were nothing less than a monument.

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Helicon West invites you to share our open mike nights every second and fourth Thursday at 7 pm during USU Semesters at True Aggie Cafe, 117 N Main, Logan, Utah.

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