The Walls and Marts Did Not Devour Them
by Maria Melendez

inspired by Brock Dethier's "Across the Grid"

Once upon a parking lot,
mazdas, jettras, fords, toyotas
veered around like unmoored planets
orbiting the rows to find a spot.

The softness of his palm was lost
to her who mothered here by jerks
and terseness: grip his wrist and pull,
like ripping weeds. It wasn't

greed brought them here, but socks,
which they all needed. As a tired
kid can hate his used-up mom,
herself yanked by bankbooks,

rent, an hour's work just barely
two milk gallons, so he hates her
in the foyer as she rattles keys
in answer to the greeter, who he hates

for the wrinkles in his face.
The boy's back tenses for the hunt
to find The Toy that will punch through
her blunt refusals. "Can't we get...

and "Please, it's only..." begin as
mantras, become koans, and end up
bitter as eternal curses on her name.
Of course she loves him still, in fury

at the flat fluorescent glare,
at the tiles with their scuffed,
insistent squares. The wired child,
blessed be his exit, will forget

he hates her later, when she rubs
the blankets at his shoulders, when he
nestsles into rest, so freely given.
He'll forget her hard sock-eyes, and she'll

remember little hands can be a balm.

white robin
by Anne Shiffer

we could only see her tail,
a few white feathers poking out
from the nest, like a champagne flute,
ethereal – not the sturdy gray
of your standard bird

chance we spotted her
chance she was white
and yet her little furnace
worked – to keep her there,
steady, with humans so near

it's hard to imagine birds
mating, much less this pretty ghost
of one elected from the lawn-hopping
worm-eaters, nature's chosen

white flower, white spider, white moth
Frost saw them, the miniature evils
of design – but something must be
right somewhere, permitting
such waywardness, white robin

blue eggs

Helicon West invites you to share our open
mike nights every second and fourth-
Thursday at 7:00 p.m.
during USU Semesters at True Aggie Cafe',
417 N Main Logan, UT.
For more information contact
star.coulbrooke@usu.edu or log onto
writing.usu.edu.
Photography by Justin Young
Broadside Editors: Brian Lee Cook,
Michelle Larsen