

Rebecca Schumejda

Going Out for Ice Cream

Dee has eighty-nine dollars
until next Friday
and is playing Mikey for a hundred.
His wife's been calling him all night;
she's waiting for the ice cream
she sent him out for.
She's eight months pregnant
and bursting with expectations.

But tonight, Dee's happy
because he's schooling
one of the Cadillac men
and he's cocky, really cocky,
telling Mikey he's washed up.

What he doesn't know
is that Mikey's just reeling him in;
that the night his wife's water breaks,
he'll be down three hundred more
than he has in his wallet;
that in twenty years
he'll be a Cadillac man too,
with his own moniker:
Dee-vorced
because his wife will have long since
melted out of his life
like the mint chocolate chip ice cream
that never will find its way home.

Stretching Felt Over the Edges

For Mark

For decades, Willy caromed
from one-one night stand to the next
while his wife waited out the years,
faithful like a porch light,
fifty-five years and counting
burnt-out bulbs. Their love
pulled tight like felt
stretched over a billiard table.

Lately our conversations are
punctuated with doubt and suspicion.
Over nine-ball, we discuss divorce,
how three couples we know
are separating. Our failures, illness,
and miscues are disruptions,
slight wrinkles in the felt
altering the course balls travel.

Ten, Twenty, Thirty, Forty, fifty,
years from now, will I wake up
beside you, the faint smell
of gamble lingering on your
pillowcase? Or will each crease,
a disappointment, change the way
we travel toward one another?