

Harpur Palate: a Literary Journal

Volume 4 | Issue 2

Article 6

January 2005

Proof

Maria Fire

Follow this and additional works at: <https://orb.binghamton.edu/harpurpalate>

Recommended Citation

Fire, Maria (2005) "Proof," *Harpur Palate: a Literary Journal*: Vol. 4: Iss. 2, Article 6.
Available at: <https://orb.binghamton.edu/harpurpalate/vol4/iss2/6>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by The Open Repository @ Binghamton (The ORB). It has been accepted for inclusion in Harpur Palate: a Literary Journal by an authorized editor of The Open Repository @ Binghamton (The ORB). For more information, please contact ORB@binghamton.edu.

HONORABLE MENTION

PROOF

Maria Fire

I remember the weary dock
hovering over a yellow lake.
Muddy water hid things better unseen.
When my youngest sister says
she remembers a certain day there,
I believe her.

What she can't forget is our father laughing
as he heaved his pasty body onto
rough boards by her sunning towel
and pranced back and forth waving
my blue bathing suit top, before
laying it at the edge of the pier and saying,
You want it, come get it.

What she can't forget is how I refused to swim nearer,
keeping silence at a distance, treading opaque water,
my chin tucked in while our mother
read her magazine, smoked her cigarette,
and our other sister and the one brother sprayed
water in my face, while laughing, too,
as people in boats motored by.

What she can't forget is our ages, 14 and 6,
how she inched over behind our father, slid
her hand slowly towards the blue top until
he put his foot down on the strap and said,
Touch it, you'll regret it.

I don't remember her story—the details.
We have children of our own now, and
our father lies a mummy in his vault.
Sister waits, studies my face for a reply.
What I can't forget is my father's hands.