

# Harpur Palate: a Literary Journal

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Volume 5 | Issue 1

Article 17

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June 2005

## Suture

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### Recommended Citation

Conley, Francine (2005) "Suture," *Harpur Palate: a Literary Journal*. Vol. 5: Iss. 1, Article 17.  
Available at: <https://orb.binghamton.edu/harpurpalate/vol5/iss1/17>

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## SUTURE

Francine Conley

Says, with all his mental aching,  
his hands are loosening from  
his arms, his wife from him,  
and while he says this he parts  
the motel curtains with nervous fingers,  
his eye on a vacant air mattress  
floating in the pool's paradox-blue.

Sets the phone on his third  
lover's doughy belly,  
both naked as aces, dials up home  
but there's no answer.  
Mumbles something about *fire cats*,  
hide-and-seek, the wish  
behind the dream.

Wonders to himself if betrayal  
oozes out of every pore,  
flakes onto his shoulders each time  
he scratches his head in disbelief.

Figures he's trying hard to tie  
his shoes the way he learned,  
but the loops, the double-knots,  
he never got it.

Says, *No one is answering*.  
Clenches the receiver like a piece of bread,  
sweat in his palm making it hard  
to let go of the thing,  
incessant ring like a trigger cocked,  
his tongue wrapped in barbed wire.

Asks, *what to do*, as a slow arc  
of light rises up the window,  
his lover's forehead, and the wall.

She stares back, a pup in training,  
her impossible hair the beaded strings  
hung over a doorway he might enter.

She lifts her arm  
as if offering in place of answers  
her hand, then pulls him down,  
blinds and all, already tasting  
the rare burger she'll buy  
on her way back to the bank.