

Harpur Palate: a Literary Journal

Volume 8 | Issue 2

Article 10

January 2009

Rondo

Jane Langley

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

Recommended Citation

Langley, Jane (2009) "Rondo," *Harpur Palate: a Literary Journal*: Vol. 8: Iss. 2, Article 10.
Available at: <https://orb.binghamton.edu/harpurpalate/vol8/iss2/10>

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.

Langley: Rondo

RONDO

Jane Langley

They lived in a dirty city that was thick with love—heat rose
from grimy grates, from grinning incinerators—the tedious
ugliness turned everybody toward one another—passion seeped through
church belfries and altar boys' white tunics, through
technicolor wrappers of take-out tacos, through the mud slapped
up on bicycle wheels and rolled-up trouser legs,
through the dust motes shielding the sun on even the longest day
of the year, music-making everywhere—

They laughed, sang, drank, smashed together in below-ground
taverns—looking at ankles and workboots
through streaky panes at eye level—they turned to each other and
others and others, and later, away, to places
with light and space and too much time, and he grew older and forgot
pretty much everything
except how she looked in torn underwear on his overstuffed
horsehair armchair—the squeak of a broken spring
when she shifted her hips his way—

He forgot the bare branches, elm, poplar—
shrank into himself, folded up like
origami in the hands of a magician who would
make him disappear. They say the city is cleaner now—fewer acoustic
guitars in drifters' hands on corners—now you can see
veined marble on the front of the public library and a pocket park
with a bench and lovers ignoring pigeons in the grass—

He kept a postcard of the old docks
stuck on the mirror over his dresser—his daughter found it after
the funeral, put it in her pocket, where it stayed when she gave
that coat away.