

Harpur Palate: a Literary Journal

Volume 9 | Issue 1

Article 27

June 2009

Down the Line

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Recommended Citation

Lemon, Alex (2009) "Down the Line," *Harpur Palate: a Literary Journal*: Vol. 9: Iss. 1, Article 27.
Available at: <https://orb.binghamton.edu/harpurpalate/vol9/iss1/27>

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DOWN THE LINE

Alex Lemon

There's a man inside you who tells you to let go of the trunk, and the branch bends the farther you walk out. When you wake, the man inside you says you should eat the dead grass that's mashed beneath you. You decide to get a tattoo of a piece of cake, Ol' English style. A few weeks after peeling the bandages away, you'll think it looks more like kelp, floating in the spotted sky that has become your back. *Where did all those moles come from, anyway?* you'll ask, wrenching your spine in the mirror. Something will pop. It will take months for sensation to return to your legs. But this is here. This is now. And you are getting up from the lawn. Finches sing above you. A girl throws a can at you from a passing car. The beer explodes at your feet. The man inside you says hello again, and you drop to your hands and knees. Blood spurts from your lips when you crush the can in your mouth. And right then, the holiday season approaching, the street now absent of traffic and completely silent, you feel, for a cracked-second, like you're teeming with a hundred bursting hearts.