

O!
Slippers.
Two
woolly
sheep.
Sleepy.
Waiting in the
dark
of the closet,
snuggled
next to the
dust bunnies
who
swirl like
ballerinas
when the door
is opened.
Slippers, red like
a brick schoolhouse,
yawning.
Welcoming cold
feet on
a chilly California
morning.



--meryl f.

Ode to the Avocado

A shining green egg, unripe.
Heavy and useless
as a rock in my fruit bowl.
But, patience.

When your dinosaur skin is the
Green-black of midnight groves,
And your flesh is a palm inside my own:
Perfection.

In the orchards of my memory,
Rats and raccoons are sleek deities
growing fat
on your tree-fall offerings.
Even our old shepherd
has a creamy green patina
around her panting grin.

Centuries before you became
the starlet of spendy brunches,
you fed the morning star of ancient skies,
the feast of Quetzalcoatl,
your cool leaves
greener than his feathered tail

And here you are still,
ripening slowly in my kitchen
until I can scoop up that momentary blessing
your perfect alchemy,
sun and bee and rain and time,
your green miracle.

--Theresa P.



Ode to My Friday Coffee Mug

On Monday morning, I see it there
behind the stack,
waiting patiently,
knowing there is time for it to settle in
and feel the comfort of other mugs around.

The others wait anxiously
as if for an audition or waiting to get picked
for a dodgeball team.

But Friday coffee mug knows there is no competition.
For it knows how its presence alone gives me hope
throughout the week
and greets me at the finish line
no matter how we got there.

We've been through a lot.
From Christmas mornings to all day chats,
embracing my lipstick stains as permanent additions
to its humble appearance.
With stains that rim the top with the shapes and colors
of my adulthood
above a Forest green pine tree,
like lights or prayer flags
blessing the tree
with years of shelter.

The mug that has caught floods of tears,
mixing them gently into the dark roast
as if to say
the taste is still great.

Tuesday to Thursday is one in the same.
It hears the daily chit chat
separated by a wood cabinet, catching words like
"arts" and "privilege"
sometimes with high tones,
sometimes with low.

Each day it says goodbye
to another mug near it
until it stands alone.
But when the cabinet opens
on Friday morning,
it sees its loyal friend smiling.
Both made it through the week,
and there is peace.

--Ivy H.



I invited you into my home
And you came in.
Polite, quiet,
Shiny and clean.
A beauty.
Waiting for direction.

And direction I gave you,
But attention, I didn't.

All along, you knew your worth.
Your value was kept strong and worn proudly.
Any complaints,
Were a mere blink of your eye.

It was easy for me to come home and find you.
Sitting, waiting for me.
Attentive.

We kept the same sleeping schedule.
You were never needy,
Was fine with or without me next to you.

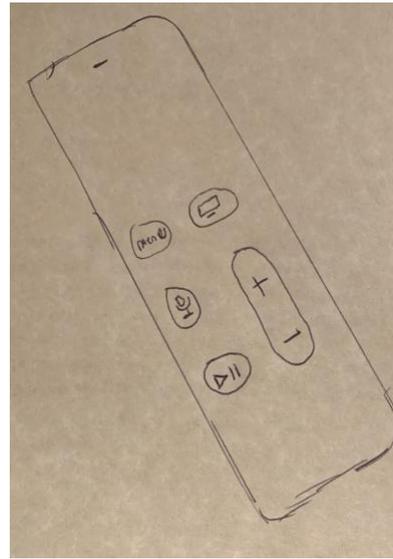
And yet,
O, and yet, my conscious holds tight to guilt.

For years, to my dismay, you were neglected.
Left dusty,
Often alone.
Yes, dusty.
And alone.

So, it comes to no surprise -
How you tease and treat me now.
You were fed up,
Tired of the abuse.
My selfishness ate away at your power.

Many trips to CVS,
Just to keep you alive.

But, remote controller,
you are worth it.



Worth every volume change.
And every press of my finger,
is pressed with full intention.
Pressed with love and appreciation.

There are times when this isn't enough for you.
You often hide,
retreating in between couch cushions.
Pillows are you best hiding place.

And I understand.
I get it.
Social distancing.

I've learned to give you the space you deserve.
Because I love and value your worth.
You provide me with access,
To the pathway of laughter, knowledge, escape.

Never again,
O, never again shall I treat you poorly.
You will be forever showered with antibacterial
massages,
Fresh batteries,
And your own coaster to lay your head on.
No longer shall you have to retreat into the
darkness of our couch.

-Theo