



## A literary journal of the Greenville Public Library

### The poetry of Darrell Petska

#### Late-night Greyhound

Come, you travelers of this land,  
you hemmed in or put-upon  
parsers of the pocketbook  
bent on grandma's heaping plates  
or the Golden Gate.  
Bring your paperbacks and iPhones,  
your bags stuffed with Cheetos,  
Snickers and pure spring waters—  
worry not, there'll be a pit stop  
at Hardee's or McDonald's.  
Put your cares on hold:  
grades, divorces, bank accounts  
or bosses' peccadillos.  
Say hello, offer a Chiclets, and nestle  
against that shoulder pressed to yours.  
Let the countryside lull you:  
drowsing villages, twinkling farms,  
headlights hurtling into battles  
you've abandoned, taillights flaring,  
impatient of promises ahead.  
The Hound plays no favorites:  
furrowed brows and weary clothes  
are standard fare for all who board.  
One night in leathery limbo  
stamps your ticket to day's new light.

### **Snapshot of Auntie**

Mute eyes, stone lips—  
once Auntie sang arias to snapdragons,  
showering the neighborhood with Verdi.  
Now she's thrall to cold, cruel Silence  
that's spared her not even a murmur.  
She fought valiantly, struggled, succumbed,  
its sheer weight suffocating speech,  
smothering all traces of mind.  
Auntie's hands lie limp in ours,  
sound's antithesis confining her,  
dulling footsteps, whispers, greetings  
and goodbyes—away we hasten  
to work, play, sing, as if much clamor  
can keep this death-in-life at bay.

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**Darrell Petska's** poetry has appeared previously in Fourth & Sycamore and in journals such as Muddy River Poetry Review, Chiron Review, Star 82 Review, Verse-Virtual, and Clementine Unbound (see [conservancies.wordpress.com](http://conservancies.wordpress.com)). In addition to writing poetry and fiction, he's tallied a third of a century on the academic staff at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, 40 years as a father (seven years a grandfather), and a half century as a husband.

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