

TYGR: Student Art and Literary Magazine 2018-present

Volume 2018
Issue 1 2017-2018

Article 41


2018

The Fields Where We Grew Up

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Recommended Citation

French, Emilee G. (2018) "The Fields Where We Grew Up," *TYGR: Student Art and Literary Magazine 2018-present*: Vol. 2018 : Iss. 1 , Article 41.

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.olivet.edu/tygr/vol2018/iss1/41>

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The Couch

By Luke Jungermann



His wallet was next.

Sam reached his car before realizing it was gone. His hands went to his back pockets, then the front ones, then to the back ones again. Going back inside his tiny apartment, he found the pants he wore the previous day and went through those pockets as well, back, then front. Next were the dresser drawers where he pulled out every sock and pair of underwear and carefully removed the small black jewelry box, placing it on his bed, and mentally pictured where he last had it, before moving onto the next drawer. Three more drawers and a closet later, still no wallet. He put everything back to where it was before, making sure he put the engagement ring in his pocket where he could always know where it was.

His watch read seven thirty. He was supposed to have picked up Lilly twenty minutes ago. She'd be angry, but she'd smile again in a few minutes in that perfect expression. He went to his neighbor's door and knocked once, then again, then again. Ms. Valerie came to her door on the fourth knock, and Sam asked to use her telephone again. His phone had been gone for a month now, and he had to learn of his father's illness from Lilly. After making the pitiful S.O.S. phone call, he thanked Ms. Valerie and went back to his apartment, sitting down on his old grey couch.

The couch itself was ugly as hell, but oddly enough, it was the centerpiece of the room. His dirty kitchen was to the right of the door with a sink filled with grimy dishes from the night before and a refrigerator loud enough to be heard from two floors above. He'd gotten complaints. In-between the kitchen and the sad excuse for a living room was a small table with