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HOLDING IT TOGETHER; STARS

Stephanie Green

Holding it Together

At the cusp between opening and closure,
agents of warmth and dignity,
loosened by rough use or nervous fingering,
lost or found at the bottom of crowded drawers,
shoved into jam jars or pushed to the back of a shelf.
Memories are held in your traces,
myriad, mismatched, piecemeal.
A tiny pale circlet from the cuff that was never mended.
Six etched cedar squares from a haberdasher on the Ile de Paris.
This precious lapis disc with its fourfold perforation
that my grandmother, Gertrude, the tailor's daughter,
sewed onto the back of my mother's wedding dress.
Always so poised with her needle and thread,
moistening the wisps with saliva and determination.

Stars

Your stars are not the same as mine but sometimes I look up just the same. In the silver-iced north, tucked in from the cold under a bearish sky, you'll never see this pointilistic beacon for lost explorers and national pride. I make no claims but in the summer season, when heat threads the days, I unfold the house to night air, hoping for sleep. And sometimes, when sleep won't come, I go out to where the drying grass makes a patch of sky between the trees. And sometimes, looking upwards I think of my grandmother on her porch, its flaky palings and squeaky boards, looking out over the paddocks of cows and oats after the others had gone to bed, waiting for the Cross to rise over a low line of feathered scrub.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stephanie Green

Stephanie Green publishes short fiction, poetry and travel essays in Australian and international journals. Her most recent book is a collection of prose poems, *Breathing in Stormy Seasons* (Recent Work Press 2019). Her poetry is included in anthologies such as the *Anthology of Australian Prose Poetry* (Hetherington & Atherton, 2020) and *The In/completeness of Human Experience* (Prendergast, Strange & Webb, 2020). She publishes extensively as a research scholar, recently contributing to 'Re-mapping Travel Writing', Special Issue 56, *Text Journal* (October 2019), which she co-edited with Nigel Krauth and Stefan Jatschka, and *The Routledge Companion to Australian Literature*, edited by Jessica Gildersleeve (Routledge, 2020).

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