



Professor Bob Watts and Abigail Michelini

Whole

Hannah is driving and Erin's next to her and I'm in the back.
We are winding our way to her old house
with white pizza and wine coolers
and if I died *right now* I'd be whole.

When we were little, Hannah poked
our arms with chunky toy needles
until we cried out with pain.
"It's supposed to hurt," she'd say.
Now we are older and no one says anything
when her husband tells her he's leaving
as in her arms their infant struggles
to breastfeed for the first time.
Erin and I drive from hours away
and shove our fists into our own mouths.

When we were teenagers
and I was starving
Hannah didn't leave me alone,
even though I begged her with silence.

And when I was well again,
she was the only one waiting.

Riding in her car I recount
the details of divorce
and graciously she says I've had it worse,
when I know I haven't.
We crucify men for each other.

Womb to wake, together
we cry and stuff back tears.

And at the center is a trinity –
Hannah is driving
and Erin's next to her
and I'm in the back.

Abigail Michelini, poetry collection "The Color of Absence." Advisor Prof. Bob Watts