



12-15-2016

## Closet

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### Recommended Citation

Patton, Laurie (2016) "Closet," *Westview*: Vol. 32 : Iss. 1 , Article 46.  
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol32/iss1/46>

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# Closet

by Laurie Patton

The upper closet  
had a tiny window—  
latticed and round.  
Its patch of light  
(sometimes gray,  
sometimes yellow)  
lifted us skyward.

We went there often  
to be wrapped  
by the hemlines  
of winter coats  
still smelling of pine  
and to be held  
by the rows of shoes,  
their leathery colors  
barely visible  
in the light.

Once we were cradled  
in fleece and wool,  
we craned our necks  
to see the moon.

One evening,  
as we were whispering  
among the coats,  
our father, the surgeon,  
came in  
and put a candle  
on the windowsill.

When we asked him  
what it was for,  
he said  
it was there  
to call our dog home.

He said  
that the flame  
in the closet window  
could bring the dog  
(now dead  
for seven months)  
back to his bed  
near the door.

