



11-15-2007

Feral Child

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Recommended Citation

Berry, Shavawn M. (2007) "Feral Child," *Westview*: Vol. 26 : Iss. 2 , Article 17.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol26/iss2/17>

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Feral Child

For Sabrina, at 13

by Shavawn M. Berry

The thistles are crackling in their coats
Calling you with the wind toward the Witch-
Woman's cabin and this hilltop's sharp peak.
Up here, you can see miles of Puget Sound
Curling around the green carcass of San Juan Island.
Up here, the sky lifts for leagues above your eyes,
Opening your chest, burning your senses

Like the sunflowers growing wild on Hannah Road.
The strong basket you carry on your arm
Slowly fills with brown eggs, a fallen bird's nest,
Blackberries and salmonberries.
You watch hawks circle, wing patterns
a languid oval in the azure sky.
Your face, a book of secret wishes.

You have fallen into a place I cannot follow.
As you climb, I see more clearly
The child being overtaken by the young woman...
You turn to me, the sun catching
Rivers of color in your long blond braid,
Wholly unaware of the light that spills from you,
Your dusky face an unfettered tangle of morning glory
Pale and lovely in the salty, still air.

