

## Innocence

### Jacquelyn Steineman

Look to the hillside

See the new yellow-green grass, the first of the year.

Smell the bloodroot that covers the side of the hill.

Feel the warmth of the sun rising over the hilltop.

Watch the girl skip across the horizon.

Look at her braided blonde pig-tails as they bounce with each skip.

See that bright blue plaid dress flow with the slight breeze.

Look.

She sees the deer eating with her newborn.

She stops.

Deer and fawn run away.

She smiles and starts skipping again.

Almost to the bottom of the hill.

About to reach the woods.

Her smile fades a little,

Her skipping slows to a sedate walk.

Watch the girl as she looks left and right before entering the woods.

She stumbles and falls, she wasn't looking ahead.

See how her dress is bent up, showing you her undergarments.

Look how exposed this poor girl is.

Poor little girl has no one to hold her hand as she enters the woods  
alone,

She trips over the skull of the last girl.

Look at this girl from the past.

Her faded and degraded purple fabric, was it ever a dress?

The bones are nearly covered by the dirt that has blown over them

through the years,

Can you even see the pelvis to tell that it was a girl?