

Dustin

Zachary Reneau

I went back on my own this afternoon, to that old trail behind our houses,

I found a slug under a rock and I think he would have liked that.

I remember once, as kids, we found a grey one, and we poured salt on it,

And I remember he laughed, as we watched it spasm, writhing in its silent agony on the sidewalk.

I swear, for a second I could hear it scream, and I shed a tear, whether for the slug, or

For something else, I didn't know.

The saline rolled down my cheek and landed on the slug without a sound,

And that was it, that was the nail in the coffin, the slug was dead.

Dustin laughed maniacally, and I think my heart stopped, maybe for a second.

As he wiped his mouth of the traces of white foam that had formed around it on that hot summer day,

We walked our bikes up that trail through the woods,

Everything gravely still, as if in mourning.