

Senior Division, Short Fiction

Emma Cole, St. John's

Shards (an excerpt)

Luckily, I'm about to pass Winnipeg when Marsha texts me. I don't text and drive, so I wait for a straight stretch of highway to glance down at the notification. Her contact photo is taken from an old album at my parents' house - her and my mom with their perms at McGill. She's inviting me to stop by her house and stay awhile.

I think for a moment, broken glass of the screen crackling under my thumb. Then toss my phone onto the crinkling bed of candy wrappers and takeout bags on the passenger seat as I merge into an exit.

At an Irving, I plug Marsha's address into my maps app. It takes me through winding blocks of suburbs covered in canopy; large, leading lawns in front of long, low houses. Marsha's place has two shiny cars parked in front of the garage, a basketball hoop in the driveway.

I park my junker behind them, making sure the spray paint tagged side is closest to the fence.

Marsha welcomes me warmly at the door, hugging me. "I didn't know you'd be here so soon!" And I realize I forgot to text back. I tell her she looks great, which she loves. She's wearing a sweater despite the summer heat, her hair big and blown out, letting the bangs fall over her face.

She gives me a tour; the house is much larger than it looks from the outside, extending way back onto the property. It's filled with photographs - some I recognize as hanging in my parents' hallway.

"Make yourself at home."