

Senior Division, Poetry  
Allie Duff, St. John's  
Bleeding Through My Jeans at The Bonavista Foodland (an excerpt)

From a TV production office in a coastal town, I stare  
while the sun bursts through the clouds  
for fifteen whole minutes.  
I'm on my period and, painfully, the sky has been grey  
for twenty-eight days.

Bored, I check Facebook, get bombarded  
with photos of my ex and his new girlfriend.  
*Sort of looks like me, doesn't she?*  
She studied Law — fear of mediocrity  
mixes with vanity's sting.

A decade, erased.  
If I'm a cardboard cut-out,  
am I also the one holding the scissors?

My coworker tells me to use pain  
as information; there's always more to learn  
when it comes to loss.  
Picking at my manicure  
like an archaeologist of feminine beauty,  
I scroll to a safer part of social media.

On the Bonavista community board,  
an article about rare birds in Newfoundland  
reads like a Christmas song:  
*Barnacle Geese in Bonavista,*  
*Lapwings in the Goulds,*  
*and a dozen Golden Plovers in Cape Race.*

These lost birds, far from home, are called vagrants —  
in the article,  
an ornithologist named (I kid you not) David Bird  
says that "Birds are like people. They really want  
to go somewhere they're familiar with."