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The Last Line of the Story: “... and when she woke from the dream, the man was lying there beside her”

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THE LAST LINE OF THE STORY:
“. . . AND WHEN SHE WOKE FROM THE DREAM, THE MAN WAS LYING THERE BESIDE HER”

Julie Bozyk

Bullshit! (said the woman with the magazine, reading the story in a grocery store Express Lane.) Love is clipping coupons for two months, saving for a train ticket. Love is still leaving my bed in the morning to knuckle-crack, keeping the habit of not waking him up. Love is sending him poems formed from letters I’ve cut from a magazine, adding some lengthier prose: laborious lamentations are reflections of steadfastness. To buy the magazine, I’ll put back the bottle of wine that I won’t need to cry myself to sleep tonight—I’ll cry cutting letters from columns like “Keeping Your Man,” wishing he liked lipstick, a firmer, rounder buttocks more than a story from a dishonorably discharged Vietnam War Vet or former Merry Prankster in a bar in Albuquerque or wherever it is he is tonight. I am in a grocery store Express Lane with far less than thirteen items, with no more pork-chops to buy for anyone, and tonight I’ll dream I’m here, shopping, pulling down boxes of pasta with his name on them, his name on the loudspeaker, my car will never get full.