

## Jimmy's Rose Tattoo

Nina Nastasia

Jimmy Rose owns a tattoo parlor  
Three times a day  
Cooks a spoon of powder  
I wash the dishes piled in his tub  
If I wait too long he may never stand up  
Up

He lies awake on an empty canvas  
And tilts his brush  
Watching brilliance drip circles on the floor  
And I lay his shirt on the bed  
I fall inside picture frames  
Breathing in his oil paints  
He doesn't see me  
He wanders in  
His mouth looks thin  
Like a child who stands there shaking  
I can feel his anger choke me

Jimmy Rose works from twelve to five  
To pay off the doctor that he prescribes  
There's kerosene in the wishing well  
And I throw a penny still holding on to his hand  
And I watch him drift, close his eyes  
I fall inside picture frames  
Breathing in his oil paints  
He doesn't see me  
He wanders in  
His mouth looks thin  
Like a child who stands there shaking  
I can feel his anger choke me

Under the gun  
Under my clothes  
He's feeding me  
I'll never know  
I'll never know  
I'll never know  
He wanders in  
His mouth looks thin  
Like a child who stands there shaking  
I can feel his anger choke me