

## Taking Root

By Megan Edmunds

She sits with hands pressed into soft dirt—  
It will remember that shape long after she is gone.  
It will file every fingerprint,  
every outline of a bone or vein,  
into the roots which lace away beneath her feet.  
And although she doesn't know it,  
with her face tilted up towards the sun  
and her eyes closed against the world,  
this dirt knows many hands.

Crying softly into her palms,  
she sits on a railroad track,  
an edge which she knows she can stand from easily  
if that familiar chugging approaches from behind or in front,  
it does not matter.  
Yet there is no sound,  
not beyond the persistent drumming of a woodpecker  
into the bark of a tree.

With her eyes closed,  
hands pressed,  
and lips sealed,  
it can almost be mistaken for something more.  
Because this all happened before, too.

A girl, lost and found,  
beneath a ball of light so vivid in the sky.  
After rain has cleared and she sneaked out of her small house—  
There they are.  
Those tracks, which carried her here,  
away from an old life in manicured cities, into this one.  
Quiet, small, filled with the persistent drumming  
of workmen on the railroad.  
And she sits,  
listening to the hammer against metal.

But with her eyes closed,  
hands pressed,  
and lips sealed,  
it can almost be mistaken for something more.  
A birdsong, like one she would hear back home.

Her handprint, it is tucked away as well,  
deep in the dirt, mixed with the few tears that fall  
as she thinks about all that she left there.  
The drumming of a woodpecker reaches her, as if through her feet.  
She puts a hand to her heart and does not dare open her eyes,  
does not dare move from this place which is somehow beginning  
to sound like home.  
She dries her tears.

A girl,  
very far away,  
does the same.