

## Laurie Barton

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### Senior at Disneyland

The lines are so noisy—I'm wet in that elderly way. My kind of sexy: dry pants and a fountain, caramel and nuts—my bench and the nightly fresh moonlight

Creeps in the old mausoleum are family, but I have survived them. I look a fright but can wiggle my booty, watch babies get carried, bless buds of their vulnerable fists

And teenagers—I try to warn them.  
Be careful of mush in your skull. Let it consolidate, don't follow me. I lived for strobe lights, on buttons and mushrooms, in love we pretended was free

## Short History of Beer

This is what happens when drinking  
too much: your father has taught you  
*Mom is unruly, a shame*

At first I was clueless—but didn't stay foggy  
for long—your father dropped hints and he brought  
presents home

One night I danced in the kitchen alone, disco  
and lager the two friends that kept me up spinning  
not knowing the effort ahead—

the hard work of bargaining not to get dumped,  
blasted and dickering, left with a brew  
and a ruby in hand

## Resolution, to Daughter

*Get drunk!*

*-Charles Baudelaire, 1821-1867*

I resolve to be a lady, despite too much  
*mojito*, having been instructed  
to get drunk!

(Not on wine but holiness  
that leads me  
to my can of roasted  
hazelnut)

I resolve to honor times you fed on me  
to pour you my very last cup  
my Tiffany lamp and ultimate pearl—

my hollow back tooth, sucked dry  
to make your skeleton

I resolve to treasure your tantrums  
in toy shops, the ponies we ogled,  
bringing them home

brushing pink tails  
silky as good girls can be

## House Poor

*December 2007: the Great Recession begins*

I just can't believe your sheer coldness at times  
like I've done something wrong just to help you—  
buying your condo: the washer, the woven wood blinds

For you, I've exhausted my mojo, but keep paying bills  
and keep cranking out income—walking past cake  
and the real estate signs

My money was muscle. *Gluteus, femoris*—  
I tore some big ones. Now life's an old sofa, my future  
is flab, the gross and intractable kind

## Done Deal

What the kind waiter said when I asked him  
for Shock Top. He said there was something  
like that. Then brought me a gold Franziskaner,  
sweet as a date with a college dean: two of us  
running from home, giddy but ready to fight,  
an eventual struggle, dory in buckets,  
fury in stillness of fellows

Another deal done as he brought me a second—  
a pilsner to gulp with the day sinking deeply,  
down to the indifferent sea

Better calm and alone  
than coupled and seething, buzzed  
and bleak. Better unknown than famous,  
or happy with something to cry for, lost  
in the gossipy tide

**Laurie Barton** is a Best of the Net finalist and two-time Pushcart Prize nominee. Her work has appeared in *juked*, *Lunch Ticket*, *Jabberwock Review*, and *Ithaca Lit*. She lives in southern California and teaches English to speakers of other languages.

