

2021

Castle

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Recommended Citation

Tucker, Seth Brady (2021) "Castle," *Birmingham Poetry Review*. Vol. 48, Article 80.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/bpr/vol48/iss2021/80>

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Castle

The boy watches the father digging in the sand, the blade of his implement forged aluminum with carbonite coating, so thin it seeps into sand rather than wrestles with it, his back cross-hatched with red & white stripes, handprints of ineffectual slatherings of sunscreen, SPF micro-arranged atoms constructed by engineers in a laboratory; they make a sandcastle, & then somehow the boy is crying, his shirt a mesh of ultraviolet-resistant fiber, protection against the animosity of the hydrogen-smelted sun, his face covered in polycarbonate sheets pressed into perfect round pink oculars, also protective; the man stands & follows the boy as he stumbles away. A kite, nanotube carbon scaffolding & nylon fabric knitted by machines & designed by a kid from CalTech flaps in the breeze above them, spins, falls. Another man, holding a beer bio-engineered by chemists & pasteurized into a can bent from space age calipers, walks past the castle, then back to it, stepping square on the four turrets & walking on, his ass full of the aggro- & bovine stimulants that our ancestors could only have dreamed of; swaying as he walks, polyurethane flip-flops dangling from his paws; then a woman in a bikini mass produced by robotic seamstresses squatting next to a baby boy purses her lips when she sees the man with the beer crush the sandcastle, but tends to the polyurethane-knitted cap on the baby's head; another man walks by & kicks at the castle as he drags the hairy tops of his feet through the sand, hair perfectly coiffed by a gel advertised to have chromium in it; the boy is back, still crying, smashes the aluminum shovel against his chair, which is coated in brilliant metallic orange, then bangs it against the sand & other toys & then he flings it at his baby brother but just misses that knitted cap because he is an only child & he has not yet learned to hit what he aims at; the baby flops to the sand, squirting a sad shot of urine out of the superabsorbent swim-pamper; it is the look on everyone's faces here, confident & content as if we are all Creators, that all we have is all we have made & all we have individually fashioned. You should tell them all that none of this comes from the glory of our human nature but in spite of it—each person here actively works against the other for space & things & bank-account magic numbers—& behind all of us, the waves are eating at the shore, each of them fighting in foam & roar to pull their piece of earth down & down & down & down & down.