

Deep Water: ‘Yes, that’ by Sarah Kilch Gaffney

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Edited and introduced by Gibson Fay-LeBlanc

I am hesitant to say much about this week’s poem. Its spare lines sizzle with loss and already say so much on their own. Though I like to talk about poems – why and how they work and what they can teach us – I also know that too often we try to explain a poem, to say what it is “about.” Many poems, like this one, just ask to be read out loud a few times so that they can work on us. I don’t know what it is like to deal with the death of a beloved, but I imagine it is something like this poem.

Sarah Kilch Gaffney lives in central Maine with her daughter and is a writer, brain injury advocate and homemade-caramel aficionado. She has written prose and poems about the death of her husband at age 31 from a brain tumor.

Yes, that

By Sarah Kilch Gaffney

I was reading Chekhov

while you were dying.

Everyone keeps

reminding me

I am alone,

so to remember

to lock the door.

I dream of

losing my shoes.

Last night,

the cat chewed

the back legs

off of a wood frog,

left it on the deck,

alive and quivering.

Gibson Fay-LeBlanc is Portland’s poet laureate. [This column](#) is produced in collaboration with the Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance. Poem copyright © 2016 Sarah Kilch Gaffney. It appears here by permission of the author.

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