

## Third Prize

### Wicker Basket by Kirsty McCormack Redbank Plains, Qld

My body  
whispers I'm  
fat with baby  
but I don't  
believe  
it anymore  
deceptive sly  
snake like this long  
splaying phalanges  
reaching possessively  
over my stomach  
fingers like  
ultrasounds can he  
hear the heart beat or just  
the gurgle of the acids in my  
stomach or the flowing of red tides  
that never seem to cease except once  
in a while to play joker with my  
heart do you think my breasts  
are in on the hoax as they  
giggle painfully at  
my expense. Now  
and again my  
body fat with  
baby pays off  
the doctors  
for a laugh  
they always pose  
so honestly  
with their  
stethoscopes  
(to test how  
strong my  
heart is  
when they  
cut it out to  
see if it is  
worthy for  
transplant)  
and their surgery  
masks (they hide

behind to  
cover their sharp  
crooked fangs  
and laughing  
hyena mouths)  
but I can  
see through them  
all they can read my body like a book  
its hows and whys tell me my lies and where  
it went wrong but sometimes they forget  
that my flesh knows more than they do  
they forget they are not in control  
and sometimes so do i. My body fat  
with baby swells like a balloon I can hear  
my stomach crying against my kidneys  
and its tears come out of  
me more often than they  
used to I'll cut off my nose  
to spite my face to stop  
the awful smells and  
even his soft warm  
touch makes my  
nipples ache like  
sand paper  
but inside

I'm just uncooked meat holding blood in a wicker basket