

*Waiting***Peggy McNally**

Five days a week the lowest-paid substitute teacher in the district drives her father's used Mercury to Hough and 79th, where she eases it, mud flaps and all, down the ramp into the garage of Patrick Henry Junior High, a school where she'll teach back-to-back classes without so much as a coffee break and all of this depressing her until she remembers her date last night, and hopes it might lead to bigger things, maybe love, so she quickens her pace towards the main office to pick up her class

lists with the names of students she'll never know as well as she has come to know the specials in the cafeteria, where she hopes the coffee will be perking and someone will have brought in those doughnuts she's come to love so much, loves more than the idea of teaching seventh-graders the meaning of a poem, because after all she's a sub who'll finish her day, head south to her father's house, and at dinner, he'll ask her how her job is going, and she'll say okay, and he'll remind her that it might lead to a full-time position with benefits but she knows what teaching in that school is like, and her date from last night calls to ask if she's busy and she says yes because she's promised her father she'd wash his car and promises to her father are sacred since her mother died, besides it's the least she can do now that he lets her drive his car five days a week towards the big lake, to the NE corner of Hough and 79th and you know the rest.