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Flight to Managua

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"Legacy of an Inland Sea," Jury S. Judge

He wasn't there at the time we said.
Someone, a woman, told me he had been
called to work. I asked for him through
the orders window at the Short Stop.
Beside grey Chryslers he asked

if he could make me a hamburger.
I said no, I was alright. The bent
manilla envelope had enough
for a plane ticket. *I wish I had \$300*
to give Enrique, someone had said.

He cried like men cry: inside themselves.
I wanted to cry, too, but I was thinking
about red rice in Haiti, how in Cuba
every day is the cigar festival.
My chest was empty as a glass.

I wrote down my number, but I never
heard if he made it. I think of him,
in an open-air house, birds of paradise
spread warm along mascarpone walls, sipping
coffee tart as a dried cherry, a son in medical school.

I wish I had let him make me a hamburger.
We could have sat and talked a while,
grease and salt on our pillowing fingers,
our lips slick, our skin softening
in the asphalt's black, residual heat.

Neysa King lives and writes in Austin. She has been published in Chaleur Magazine, Slippery Elm Literary Journal, Huffington Post and elsewhere.

Jury S. Judge is an internationally published artist, writer, poet, photographer, and political cartoonist. Her Astronomy Comedy cartoons are also published in The Lowell Observer. Her artwork has been featured in literary magazines such as Dodging The Rain, The New Plains Review, The Ignatian Literary Magazine and Fearsome Critters. She graduated Magna Cum Laude with a BFA from the University of Houston-Clear Lake in 2014.