

# Cameras

Daniel Gallant  
Prince George, BC, Canada

smiling is not my thing  
a bruised faced seven year old torn  
unhappy family drunk and fighting  
rape instills the image

smile for the camera son  
I said “smile! fucking smile! you lil’ puke”  
a fascist father  
a pacifist mother

I cannot tell a lie  
for the truth releases  
a rebellious revolutionary  
alone and fed-up  
run child run  
far from that camera

by twelve, not the tick tock at midnight twelve  
salvation was sought on a greyhound  
my thumb was a highway star  
in the midst of northern BC winters  
an icy picture, click-click

hungry and distraught  
I walked alone  
resisted a snap shot happy society  
gleaming poised smiles of fallacies imposed  
whims of keen elders entrench their lives  
never escapable gallows of denial captured  
polaroid, film, and digitally etched memorandums

smile or be chastised  
but do not remind us  
we know your skeletons  
click, winding, click  
every shutter of the camera  
I hold dead-pan-face  
“fuck you! picture this!”  
a small boy’s finger projected  
remember this image  
forget your acceptance

every click and whine haunts me  
pictures etched in my memory  
christmas, birthdays but not halloween  
I got to embody the star child and the beast  
now I can smile  
click, click, click  
good boy  
we love you

I want to die