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Leaving Franklinville

Sharon Bricker

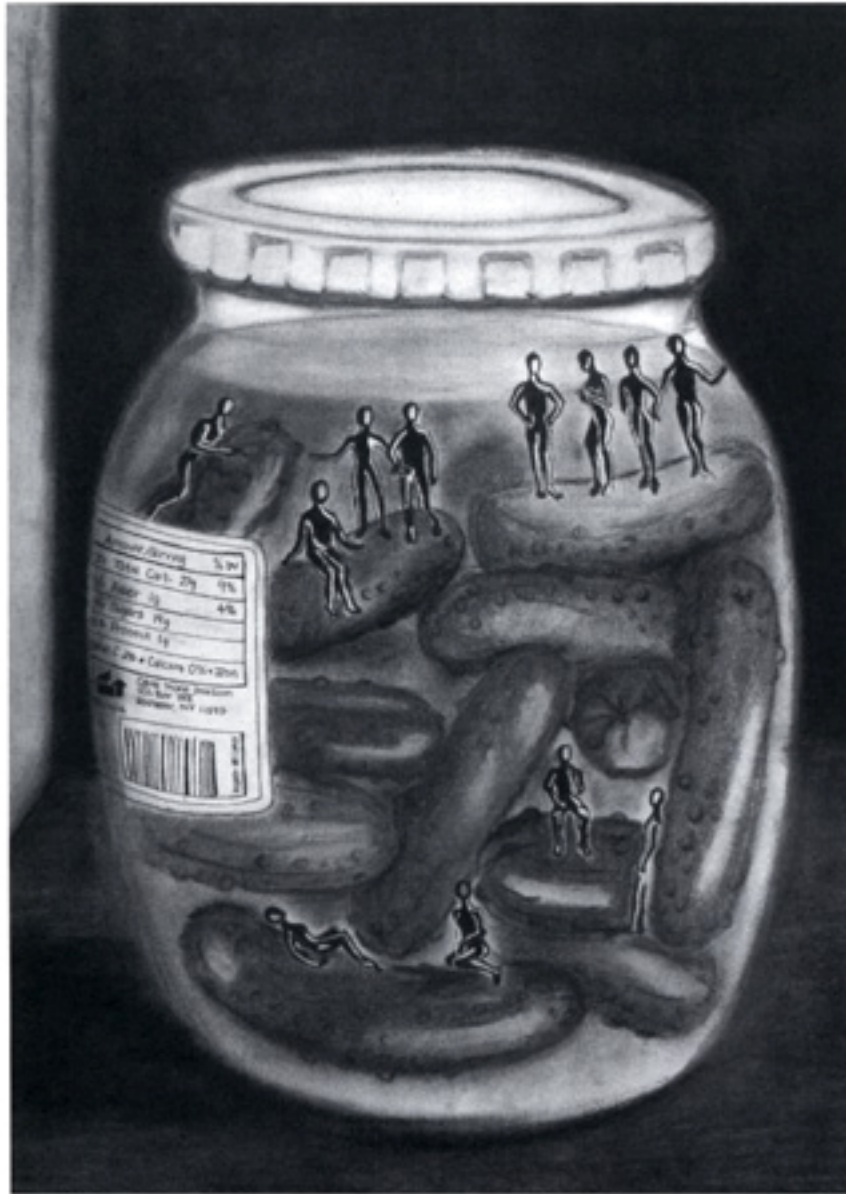
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SHARON BRICKER {LEAVING FRANKLINVILLE
(Nominated, Margaret Haley Carpenter Prize for Poetry)

"Can I help you?" she asked from behind the counter.
 "Probably not," I said with my best dapper smile
 And sighed as I put the tin of coffee and the
 package of bolts in front of her.
 She fixed on her polite smile. She was probably
 thinking of the weather.
 For the one-hundredth and twenty-first time
 (or at least that many)
 I almost begged for something different to happen:
 A gun pointed at me! A tornado at my apartment!
 The aliens have landed!
 (Another sigh.)
 There I was, with the pretty lawn ornament cashier,
 wearing an old shirt
 And buying two things I really didn't
 give a shit about.
 "Honey, you know, I've changed my mind," I said,
 and left the store carrying nothing.

BETH THOMAS {UNTITLED

