Recompense
by Megan Van Horn

i.

We step over the backs of Germans and Italians ringed in circles around granite obelisks on our journey to the olive grove. My grandmother gave me her floral-patterned umbrella to shield my forehead from more freckles, and my other hand carries a plastic bag, three oranges, and a trowel.

ii.

My grandmother’s fingers loop around the crook of my elbow as we bear down on the olive grove and the backs of our companions, off in the distance and smudged against the glare of afternoon sun.

iii.

My brother skips ahead next to my uncle, impatiens in his arms, and my mother carries a lighter and a coffee can, my father the jug of water and bottle of rice wine.

iv.

We ring ourselves two rows deep around my grandfather and light bonfires in the olive grove to keep him warm. The
water is for the impatients and
extinguishing the flames
and the wine for the oranges
sliced open with a pocketausafe
and the cold chicken that my
uncle brought. And now as
we cross back over the
Serbians in the ground,
our silhouettes against the sunset
scorch seven red thumbprints
in the sky, just one shy
of happiness.

The Ring of Kerry
by Alexandra Parthen
I had never preferred the open air.
My shoes were always too nice for mud,
and when we ran off that bus,
I watched only my feet as we climbed
down the incline of bumpy rocks.
But the moment that my shoes hit the gray sand,
I looked up.
The ocean glittered and the sun’s
sudden glare hit my eyes.
Smooth black rocks rose around me,
framed by patches of vibrant grass that blew in the breeze.
I stood in the center of it all,
and the earth finally felt big enough.