

2018

Denture; Bridge; Crown

Aidan Vansuetendael
Denison University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Vansuetendael, Aidan (2018) "Denture; Bridge; Crown," *Exile*: Vol. 64 : No. 1 , Article 7.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile/vol64/iss1/7>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the English at Denison Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Exile by an authorized editor of Denison Digital Commons.

Caleb sat in his car the day his tooth fell out
and smiled in the little fold down mirror
in his car and counted his white teeth, seven,
and his gray teeth, four, then folded up the mirror
and called a number he wrote on a scrap of paper,
asked to come in right away, then hung up
and closed his mouth, pressing his lips together.

Caleb lay back in the dentist chair and breathed in
the cold smells: fluoride, disinfectant, air freshener,
unfamiliar and uncomfortable smells that made him
feel out of place, like an inconvenient and awkward guest.
The dentist came in with his cloth mask and Caleb
could hardly tell if he was smiling behind his mask,
and wished desperately to know whether or not he was.

With his hidden perfect dentist teeth like a white
picket fence around his hidden sanitized pink tongue,
the muffled dentist said the options, the prices as
high as lottery winnings, digits and digits, and Caleb
thought of how the dentist's teeth were a small fortune
in his perfect mouth, a sterile opulence crowning his jaw.
Porcelain, enamel, silver, gold; denture, bridge, crown.

The dentist gave him a little hand mirror, and asked
for his choice, *perhaps the most affordable option?*
and Caleb set his jaw, looked at the two eyes above
the white cloth mask, and said with sterile certainty:
Gold.