

Second Place Poetry

**Lady Day**

By Pat Washington

Ragged riffs stick in her throat  
till she tosses her head, shuddering  
quickly draining the glass.

Easing back on the stool  
she signals a slow tempo  
scatting syllables  
from a mouth bruised  
by living hard  
like the glass filled with cognac  
held forgotten in her hand.

She floats above the horns  
flinging notes into the crowd  
while flying high on a white horse  
with sharp edged wings.