

## SYLVIA FOLEY

### Invention

They often tried to pick each other's locks. He invented deathtraps: for dog ticks, suffocation in a can of used motor oil; for kitchen mice, a glue trap muffled in kapok so she wouldn't have to hear them scream. He invented the only way to rake leaves: in a tightening spiral that allowed no drifting. Their bed was two iron frames wired together like a broken jaw. She wasn't as inventive, but that said, she invented a method for turning glass against itself. Hold tumbler by its fat neck, eye the glazed table, send A smashing into B with a piston-stroke. She mastered that annealing silence. Together they invented a kind of trance in which each became sulfur in the other's eye. When he upended the Monopoly board it was because he was losing her. She left us there with him and his knowledge of poverty.

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**SYLVIA FOLEY** is the author of *Life in the Air Ocean* (Knopf, 1999), a collection of linked stories. Her fiction and poetry have appeared in various journals, most recently in *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *The Antioch Review*, *Hypertext*, and *The Literary Review*. She's been a fellow at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts and Yaddo.

