



The Iowa Review

Volume 45
Issue 1 *Spring 2015*

Article 3

2015

Pressing On

M. E. Hope

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview>

 Part of the [Creative Commons](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Recommended Citation

Hope, M. E.. "Pressing On." *The Iowa Review* 45.1 (2015): 13-13. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.7551>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Review by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact lib-ir@uiowa.edu.

M.E. HOPE

Pressing on

My grandmother taught me to iron
how to bend and shuffle a blouse
around the ironing board's broad nose
how to insinuate the heat and steam
into a ruffled edge, hold down a pleat,
tame a collar. Lesson coveted at boot
camp as we set to perfect creases
and seams. The marks were complicated
enough, but once pressed in, a dungaree
shirt became a recruit's dream. Each
item of clothing had a required fold,
a set spot on the locker's shelf, a line
on the edge and the lip. Each folding
was origami-like in perfection and with
each practice, the time and the finished
garment, closer to a work of art. Those
few of us with the patience and practice
were given space, like old-world artisans
at some sacred skill and I laughed
as we practiced it, this woman's work,
this mundane, mindless craft.