

# Ellipsis

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## Self-Check-Out

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## Self-Check-Out

Elizabeth Theriot

*Ryan Chighizola Memorial Scholarship Winner*

In the fall I'd make unnecessary rounds  
over scuffed, speckled tile  
in case you were ~~namelessly~~ there-  
an anonymous book browser, a stranger buying milk.

Watching life at noon, seven, dusky three,  
I saw the protruding stomachs  
pregnant with hamburger-death  
stretching filthy shirts and wide-eyed navel

(Cyclops, do you still blame Nobody?)

and the young man's leg,  
tendons swimming a  
synchronized stroke  
delicately in cream smooth skin  
under the fluorescents hairless and illuminated.

(But I am relieved you're keeping busy  
discharged from the squealing basket wheeled  
nail-biting purple eye socket army  
of sleepless bags, potato chip bags, plastic bags of groceries)