



Digressions Literary Magazine

Volume 13

Article 3

April 2016

Sacrilegious

Juanita Castro

Nova Southeastern University

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Recommended Citation

Castro, Juanita (2016) "Sacrilegious," *Digressions Literary Magazine*: Vol. 13, Article 3.

Available at: <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/digressions/vol13/iss1/3>

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Sacrilegious

Author Note

Juanita immigrated from Colombia when she was younger and now lives in South Florida. She's been writing, drawing, editing, and petting as many dogs as she can for years now. She's active in the Jason Taylor Foundation, and currently interns for the Omari Hardwick blueapple Poetry Network. She was recently crowned the Youth Poet Laureate of South Florida, and splits her time now mainly in between writing, volunteering, and teaching creative arts at schools. She loves Digressions as much as she loves petting puppies.

Sacrilegious

Juanita Castro

Add in:

9 cups of doubt

A teaspoon of bitterness

A sprinkle of apathy

A sliver of self-deprecation

Too many stories about the greatness of a higher power

4 communion wafers

3 disappointing Christmases

1 and a half hours of Mass

1 lie in the form of a confirmation

Salt.

My sacrilegiousness began the day

I snuck into a deserted chapel

and stole a communion wafer from
the dusty altar

and let it melt on my tongue, dry and

tasteless, no, it tasted like Nothing,

a mixture of disappointment and confusion,

bland and scratching my throat on it's way down

A silent foreshadowing of my time to come

Inside the endless silent walls of endless silent chapels

Waiting for something to come save me from a life

That I never wanted to face up to -

I don't believe in God and I don't believe in myself

I wish there were something for me there, I wish I could speak in tongues and fall to the

floor and understand why people can put so much faith

into a pile of bricks but never in themselves

But every time I walk though the doors of any church, I feel Nothing

No, not true; I feel bitter disappointment at both myself for wanting to believe

in a dusty book and at the dusty book for letting me down

I feel slightly angry at blind ignorance, extremism and hatred cloaked as faith

I feel regret at having wanted to believe so blindly, I feel regret for not being able to,

I feel sadness because every time I walk into a church or see my grandmother pray a

rosary for me,

I feel an empty gaping space inside my chest that no higher power can fill,

I feel empty and incomplete and I wish I could shovel in church blocks and build a cross

of mortar on my soul,

but the foundations are cracked, they've always been cracked

I still feel defective in some ways;

what is missing inside of me that I cannot believe in golden chains and in silent chapels?

Do you believe you're missing out, and that everything good is happening somewhere
else?

Well, Jesus Christ, I'm alone again,

So what did you do those three days that you were dead?

I have a feeling this problem will last longer than the weekend

Well, Jesus Christ, I'm not scared to die, I'm a little bit scared of what comes after

Do I get the golden chariot—am I worthy, in the eyes of a greater good,

in the arms of a Holy Ghost that continually haunts me?

I find true spirituality and inner peace in rain, in falling rain

I feel peace when violins play, in the quiet spaces between trees and my own breath in the
early morning,

in the soft skin at the back of my own neck,

In the brokenness of other people,

In the way that the sea kisses the shore for an eternity

I have found greater tastes on my tongue than those of a dusty communion wafer—

I have a body I wish I could eat as bread every day, ha.

I have swallowed up the sunshine of the laughter of my life as if it was holy blood,

And if I could stopper the feeling of driving down a highway late at night with all the
windows down and nothing but the wind rushing towards me, I would

I have been to airports that have seen more sincere kisses than weddings

And I am sitting in a hospital that has seen more honest prayers than church pews,

More tears of mine than I can lay on pewter mortar

I think of eternal sunshine, I like being ephemeral,

and I will watch my life through art museum window panes,

And someday, I will tour the churches of Italy again,

and I will see more than stolen pasts inside the Vatican,

I will absorb art and beauty in life, and I will find my own

absolution, absolution!

And yet, I am not absolute, I have bitten from too many fallen apples and have trampled
on the battlegrounds

of scarlet seals and marble faces, and the gold plating on the vases of the Romans

is the same gold that makes up the fake teeth of smiling sphinxes,

I am, upon my own grace, a martyr.

I, I am not sure that I believe in the people, but the people still believe in me,

and so, I will walk the road of morality and mortality and remember

how temporary my breathing is, and how frail my bones

will look when they, too, are dust.

I will fall on my knees before Degas and yet not before an altar, and I wonder

what kind of person

this makes me.