

\$7



featuring an  
interview with Kwame Dawes

# MOCHILA REVIEW



## This Is How We Love

Emilee Kinney

Like wind  
tearing  
from our home,  
gritty black  
beneath, your  
tongue  
against my skin,  
back pale  
flesh for  
roses  
siding  
exposing  
grates  
peeling  
beneath.

## The Men Who Hold Her

The tips of her new black-buckle  
boots balance atop her father's  
smooth black dress shoes,

one hand holds the back of his  
knee, kept straight, and the other  
fist wraps around his pinky

but doesn't pull; she wants to do  
it, to dance by herself and he keeps  
his legs straight, holding her weight

on the tips of his toes so that she won't,  
so that she doesn't fall away from him.  
Their first dance was at his wedding

to her mother who will teach her not  
to trust the men who hold her.  
For her father will dance with another

bride, will hold a new lover like he held  
her mother, will leave her without smooth  
black dress shoes or a hand to lean against.

As she grows, she will find herself  
in the arms of a man whose name  
she doesn't know, who will plan

to lead her back to his room after they  
dance to songs she's never heard.  
She'll hold his pinky as he twirls her away

from him, but won't pull when he spins her



back to his chest. She wants to dance  
by herself, but will remember her father's  
locked knees and bent frame that held  
her weight as she'll tap her black boots  
between the man's shoes. He'll wrap

his arm around the small of her back  
so she won't, so that she doesn't, fall too  
far away from him. Her mother warned

her not to trust him, but her father never  
showed her how to end a dance.