

## RAPID ENGLISH MOVEMENT

Kassie Rubico '08G\*  
Chelmsford, MA

The clock screams six  
and I'm alarmed because I  
haven't slept for days, months, maybe years.  
A comma separates lists of three or more.  
They thicken the haze of my unconsciousness,  
fragments of him, then her, and I cross the threshold  
of hell, tossing and turning over the sharpness  
of possessive pronouns, until Satan, himself, sends me  
back to my perfunctory reality, but I don't give a damn  
because he's not real, and they're not real.  
Nothing is anymore except for the red  
numbers on the clock, and the colon separating them.  
I ignore their warning of another  
day because I'm afraid of what might not come.  
What is a gerund? They'll ask,  
and I won't know or care,  
but I'll have to say something,  
so I'll tell them to look it up. I remind myself  
to look it up later, but I know I'll forget.  
I forget everything, or maybe I remember more than I should,  
like split infinitives and independent clauses.  
The seconds beat in conjunction with my throbbing pulse,  
and I know I should move, but I can't,  
or I won't, and it doesn't matter because I'm alone in the bed now,  
and it will flow without me, or maybe not. Iron my stonewashed jeans;  
feed the pets. What's for breakfast? I don't have a pen. When is this due?  
A comma splices through my pausing thoughts and then  
the dentist at 3:00; art lessons at 5:00; practice  
at 7:00. Homework take hours;  
I should call the math teacher.  
My left calf cramps, but my head doesn't hurt this time.  
Mozart nudges me again through the  
brown box on the nightstand while  
the sun casts a warm shadow  
on the white ceiling. My sneakers  
summon from the corner of the room, and  
I respond to the run on sentence.

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\* **KASSIE RUBICO** earned a M.A. in Writing and Literature from Rivier College in 2008. She is an Adjunct Writing Professor and freelance writer for Coolrunning.com. Kassie has been a guest contributor for *The Lowell Sun* and *Chelmsford Independent* and is currently working on a collection of creative nonfiction. When not writing about reality, she is often running from it. Kassie lives in Chelmsford, Mass. with her husband and three daughters.