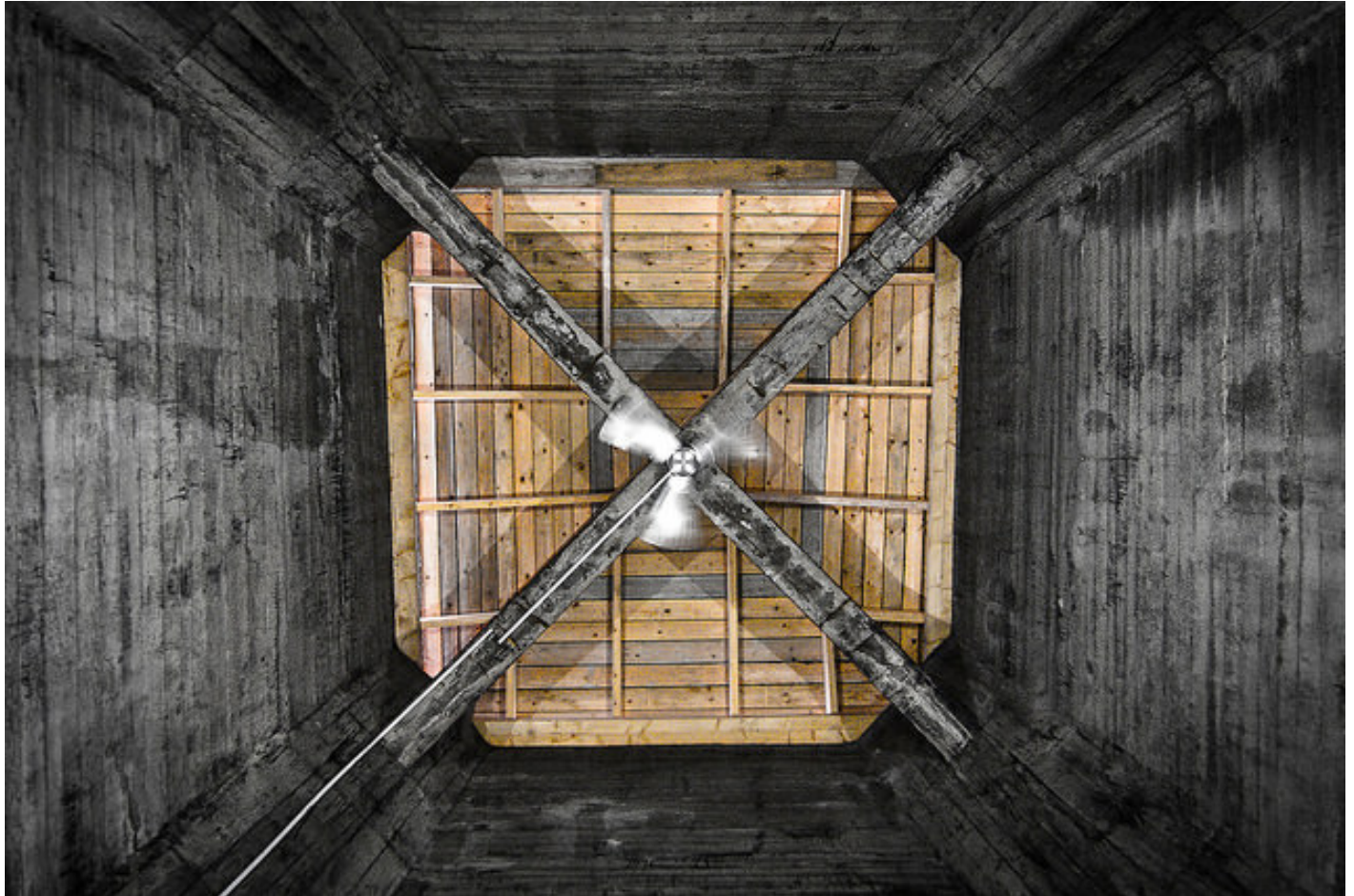


[Lost Wax](#) [1]

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Flash Fiction by Leonard Kress



Stacey works in a foundry in Cleveland, casting scrap metal into shiny garden gnomes. She studied sculpture at Michigan State, but dropped out in her junior year, after becoming enamored with welding and lost-wax casting. Stacey intended the foundry to be something of an internship, a way of learning more about the process than her professors could provide, but she never returned to East Lansing (though it was less than an hour north of her parents' home outside Ann Arbor).

It's at the foundry that she meets Sol, a lawyer recently divorced, who is there investigating a truck accident. Two people were horribly injured on the Ohio Turnpike when a flatbed jackknifed while exiting on the clover leaf near Sandusky. Sol has a hunch that the load, which came from the foundry where Stacey works, shifted because it hadn't been properly secured.

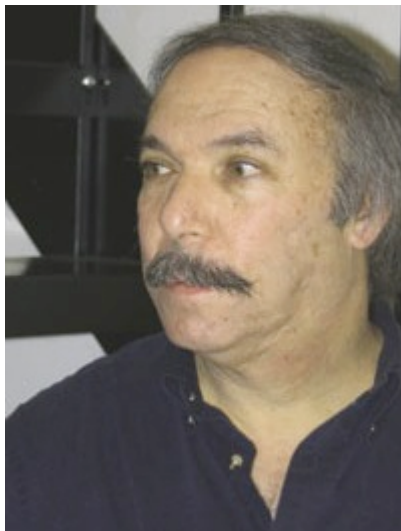
He's nosing around the loading docks, trying his best to look like a salesman, inspecting the forklifts and nylon straps and banding procedures, when Stacey comes out to get a cup of coffee from the snack truck. She is tall and sleek and

sweaty, her hair covered by a red kerchief that reminds him so much of the babushka his grandmother used to wear around the house when he was a kid. Stacey is muscular, in better shape than Sol, her collarbone as defined as a steel rod, gleaming red-hot from the furnace of the sun. Her forehead and cheeks are smeared with black fragments of weld she spent the last two hours chipping off with a pneumatic chisel.

Sol's divorce isn't final, but at this moment, he knows he wants this hot, hod-carrying girl. So much so that he blows his own legal case and introduces himself as the "enemy" when he approaches the snack truck and insists on paying for her coffee and donut. Her hand is still shaky from the intense vibration of the chisel, and as she reaches over to grip the Styrofoam cup, scalding coffee sloshes over Sol's hand. She flashes a hurried, embarrassed smile and, after putting the cup down, tries to wipe it off his wrist with the untucked hem of her tank top. He quickly moves beyond the professional thought that he might have chanced on a workplace injury in need of litigation—something akin to *jackhammer palsy*—and smiles back.

Art Information

- "[Factory Tower](#)" [3] © Vlastimil Koutecký; Creative Commons license.



Leonard Kress has published fiction and poetry in *Solstice Literary Magazine*, *Passages North*, *Massachusetts Review*, *Iowa Review*, *American Poetry Review*, and other journals.

His recent poetry collections are *The Orpheus Complex* (Main Street Rag Press, 2009), *Thirteens* (Aureole Press, 2010), and *Living in the Candy Store* (Finishing Line Press, 2011). He teaches philosophy, religion, and creative writing at Owens College in Ohio.

Why is this flash piece fiction?

I'm not sure I could say more than because that's the way it came out. It didn't seem to call for more words or actions. I suppose it has more of a lyrical thrust—a bright temporary light (a flash) illuminating something in time and space.

Source URL: <https://www.talkingwriting.com/lost-wax>

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