

Harold & the Purple Crayon

By D. Gilson

Berkeley psychologists told Harold
his anger was justified. What parents
let their child go for a midnight walk
under no moon? *I couldn't have
been more than four*, Harold told
the doctor in her crisp beige office.
*Doctor, could it ever be OK
for a four-year-old to eat nine
different types of pie?* Harold asked her.
Call me Lisa, the doctor replied.
Everyone knew Harold could draw.
By sophomore year, he was critiquing
grad students. By twenty, Harold knew
exactly when to quote Sontag. Standing
in front of a professor's latest pastel
of Mojave succulents: *This just makes me think
how in place of a hermeneutics, we need
an erotics of art*. Harold's professors
would hum & nod their dragon heads
(though none of them understood, exactly,
what Harold said). By senior year, Harold
became distant, his work increasingly angry:
apple trees, their fruit rotting in monochrome
purple, under the notable lack of a moon.

Source: *Poetry* (May 2017)