

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)