



4-2006

## Two Glass Pitchers

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### Recommended Citation

Hansen, Holly Rose (2006) "Two Glass Pitchers," *Inscape*: Vol. 26 : No. 1 , Article 6.  
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/inscape/vol26/iss1/6>

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HOLLY ROSE  
HANSEN

## two glass pitchers

I made orange passion fruit juice this morning in my glass pitcher that kind of looks like the Kool-aid man. I have two of them, exactly the same. One I got for my wedding and the other one I got five years later—for my divorce, I guess you could say. I can't tell one from the other, so alike they seem to me. I am happy to use both of them, the contents tasting as good, pouring out as well, mixing as smoothly. Both were gifts from our family members making sure my husband and I were taken care of, that we had all we needed, that everything was in order. The first one I unwrapped while wearing a white dress in a reception hall; the second gift I received outside my townhouse.

I had just pulled up and his sister's family was there on the sidewalk, wrapped gifts in hand, with the new baby, six months old now. It was dark and Christmas cold but they could not come in. It was late and they needed to be on their way home to get their two babies in bed. Kjerston was still in her carseat and I kissed her there, my tear clinging to her cheek, and she cooed out something that sounded like Aunt Holly. I hugged Eldon, crying harder now, his big toothy grin revealed in the lamplight. And Laurisa, large glasses glinting, awkward and fumbling a bit with the baby, crying too—the dark past of the asphalt beneath our feet. Sniffing, whipping at the tears washing over my cheeks, no Kleenex, just wiping it on my jeans, asking about the family, hugging them, holding the baby, not knowing what to say. Smiling

and crying and wondering what I was doing outside on a dark and cold Christmas night with people I used to call my family. I waved to them, wiping at my eyes as they drove away, their headlights flashing, blinding me as they turned.

I went inside, without turning on the light, and unwrapped the box, the cool light of the streetlamp streaming through my gauzy curtains. Another pitcher, I thought, just like the old one. I don't think they knew they had completed the pair, don't think they could have foreseen the irony when they picked it up at Lecter's or Wal-Mart as they dashed off to buy other things on their list. But I did as I washed it out and put it in the cupboard next to its mate. There wouldn't have been room for it there, not before he had taken his bowls and pie plates. It's a good pitcher even though you have to put cling wrap over it to stop the juice from tasting like salsa and potatoes when you put it in the fridge. I like the way you can see the juice through it, how it is heavy in your hand, feeling solid as you pour. I like the way ice crystals form in it when you use cold water and frozen juice concentrate, the way the glass is cold when you hold it in your palm to steady it. If I dropped it, it would shatter, forever broken on the hard floor, unfixable, to be swept up and put in the garbage can, perhaps leaving little pieces of glass to find months later as you sweep a forgotten corner or while walking in the kitchen one morning wanting some juice. But instead you push the hard sliver in your toe, the red drop of blood forming unexpectedly as you pull out the glass.

But I do not drop it. I hold it carefully and put it safely in the cupboard with the other one, their bases kissing, not knowing which one was the start and which one the gift of the end and me not being able to tell which one I like better, so alike they are to me.