

Soap

by Katrina Denza

Jackson's a chocolate lab. I brought him home from the no-kill this morning. I've always wanted a dog, but I did it more for Wylie. We stand under the willow with the water running out the hose, Jackson, Wylie and I. Dandelions cover the lawn: a yellow rebellion.

When Wylie was four, a pit bull took a chunk out of his left cheek. He'd been trying to tell the neighbor's dog, this pit bull, the story of three little pigs and his little arms and hands described the shape of the house and that was it: the dog erupted.

Wylie turns the bottle of soap upside down and squeezes. You can rub it in, I tell him. It'll feel good. Wylie's hand hovers above the river of shampoo. If I look close enough I'd see the trembling, but I don't. Instead, I take in Jackson, sitting on the wet grass, covered in strawberry-scented soap, straight, still, waiting for my son's hand.

