

Poetry Porch: Poetry

September 25, 2021

By Carla Schwartz

Harry L. Reaves Arena, Perry, Georgia

The glint of pomade in your airbrushed hair, sprayed across your forehead, your teeth, white, your anger, curled into your lips. Your gaze darted all over the place. Do you pay for the *Save America* placards to be held up on cue? Do you see the irony of stumping in an arena named for another *dammed Dem* you couldn't deflect? You're not ashamed to pull numbers from a hat. Here are some numbers for you—my father drove our '62 Beetle down highway 75 at 95 mph until he burned out the engine. Four of us stranded by the side of the road in Perry, Georgia—'67—years before those rally fairgrounds ever existed. Another father—Jesus hanging from the rearview—stopped to help. Such a small town—the stranger found us a tow and something to eat. New Yorkers, like you—we were just a small family enroute to Florida, soon, in a rented *Bel Air*, grateful for the air conditioning. But my father was nothing like you—even with a stranger, he was humble, said *Thank you*, admitted he'd *screwed up*.