**Things Left Behind at the Big Woods Hotel and Wasserbahn Park,**

**Summer, 1985**

Gordon W. Mennenga

A sword made in Germany, posed precisely across the pillows.

A glass eye, blue, accusing.

Blood, always blood.

An annotated novel, wherein the writer mocks punctuation rules.

Enough orphaned underwear to catalog and put on display.

Shoes, slippers, sandals, socks, the feet deserted.

A magazine published in Australia featuring close-up photos of women’s nipples.

Sexual appliances that buzz, hum and wiggle, condoms, diaphragms.

An inflatable man named Chet.

A purse filled with pumpkin seeds.

A one-eyed teddy bear, a windup penguin.

Ten pounds of sugar next to a noose.

Guns, many of them ready to fire. A holster with “Jenny” written in rhinestones.

A unicycle, a tricycle, watches, wallets, warrants.

A man hiding in the closet professing a fear of sunlight.

A Fender electric guitar, a clarinet, bagpipes, a harmonica collection.

A birthday cake for Sweet Irene.

Belts, belts, and belts. Bras, bras and bras.

Things that hold in, things that hold up.

A catalog of affordable coffins.

A 600-page hand-written manuscript on blue paper, *Smash and Grab: A Charlie Dane Mystery,* penned by anonymous.

Teeth, gold, false, no bite left in them.

Enough drugs to waste a small city.

A glass bottle filled with a hazy liquid that was highly flammable.

A baby boy, serene, hungry, ready to make an argument. The room to be forever known as “the manger.”

The rooms, little islands in an ocean of joy and despair,

the lure of the empty mirror.