

YVETTE A. SCHNOEKER-SHORB

AN OUNCE OF POMEGRANATE JUICE

“Just use the rest of it,” he says,
frustrated, pointing to the juice,
pomegranate, the level of purple
liquid now far less than the clear
glass of the bottle. Frustrated,
he’s wanting to get on the road.
Still holding my measuring cup,
I tell him the stuff is expensive,
that I’ll drink the rest tomorrow,
so he needs to go get ice. Twice
this morning we’ve had this
conversation; he finally gives in,
walks off carrying the little bucket
with the plastic liner, but he doesn’t
return. After fifteen minutes,
my concern is still minor,
as I begin to suspect he has
been distracted but never expect
the frantic knock on the door or
the panicky woman who informs me
he accidentally got locked in the ice
room, and neither the front desk
nor motel maintenance man has a key
that works. Two maids and a gathering
crowd attempt to reassure me he will be
okay; they point to a display of police,
paramedics, and fire department guys
wielding axes and crowbars. They
break the bolt of the concrete door,
soon ajar—applause and now
almost noon. Later in the day,
as we drive away, he apologizes,
remembering he forgot to get
the ice for the cooler, and I confess
I drank the rest, trying to swallow
more than an ounce of guilt.