



## Delilah

Dad found Delilah for me. He attended to her health and when I could I joined him. I remember looking into her heart as I replaced her aging parts, this metal beast who would carry me thousands of miles. We strapped more and more onto her slight frame, commissioning her to bear the sum of my life.

I crossed the prairies in a heat wave. 40°C plus full gear, a hot wind sucking every drop of moisture from my skin.

No potable water, and I was too stubborn to pay for a bottle. Water should be free.

That's when I first saw the slick pool under Delilah. No. We have only each other, isolated from everything we know. When I stopped again there was no denying that the source of the iridescent fluid was her abdomen. I made it to the next city, my legs shaking, barely able to flip down the kick stand. I found a doctor who could see her. He looked at us both with concern. "You shouldn't be out in this heat." He said he didn't know anything about Hondas but within minutes he found her wound. "She's fine, just overheating, nobody rides on days like today."

100 more kilometres. Over and over my chapped lips framed the words, *I will survive this*. By the end of that hour I was shouting into the unrelenting heat as the monotonous horizon mocked our apparent immobility.

That night, surrounded by hundreds of prairie dogs, we watched the sunset.

By Rachael Barnett