

# Heartbreak Hill

*R. A. Christmas*

I go to Brenda's wedding wearing  
her ex-husband's cast-off temple garments.

After the kiss, Chuck starts to pull  
the veil back down over Brenda's face —  
(the audience laughs)—  
she gives him a look, and he flips it back up.  
"I'm not a professional at this," he cracks.  
(We laugh even harder.)

At the reception, which just happens  
to be under the brow of the Stake Center,  
I sit at the gays' table  
listening to Country Rock on the patio  
while my second wife nurses my seventh child.

Brenda smears cake all over Chuck's face,  
a drunk sings "Desperado,"  
and my kids won't dance with each other.  
They want my strawberries  
injected with Grand Marnier.

Just over the back fence  
looms "Heartbreak Hill," where the elders eternally  
weed, where once the bishop's son caught  
a nest of yellow jackets up his pant leg—  
I light a cigarette and glance over my plastic  
champagne glass at some avocados I planted,  
only last year.

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