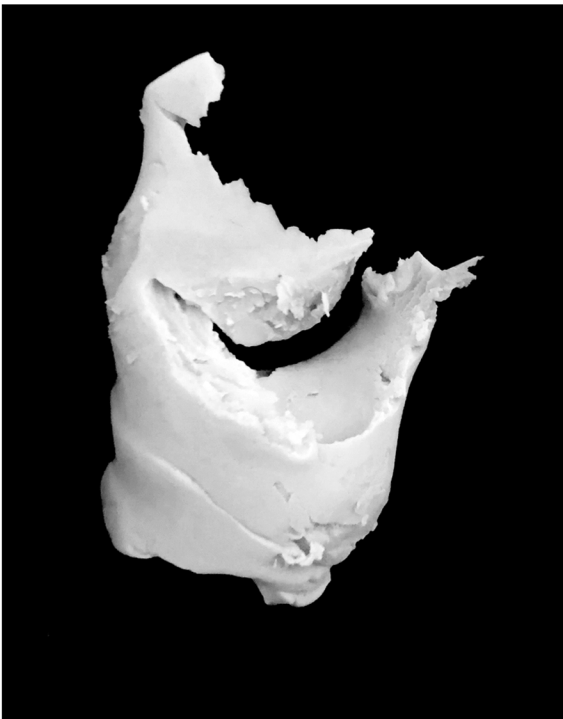
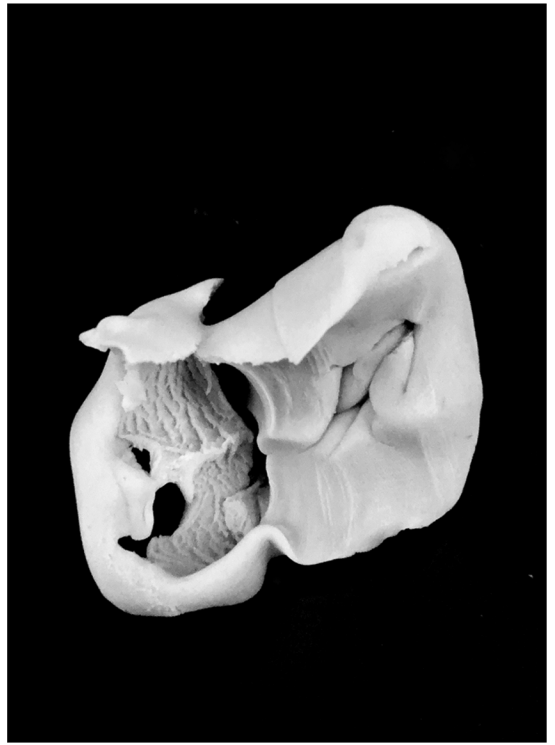


snaggletooth

Issue 3
Spring 2019



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COVER
Bones
Play-doh, digital photography
Domi Frideger
2018

491
digital photography
Elliot Wilson
2018

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“god swipes left on me on tinder”

because he’s all-knowing, or something like that. because what else is there to do on a saturday night? because i don’t have a bible quote in my tinder bio, so none of his pickup lines would work on me. god swipes alone, one hand in a potato chip bag, feet propped on the coffee table littered with eroded advertisements about the afterlife. funny how god, too, is the truest version of himself on an app. funny how chip grease smudges womanhood into pixels. after enough bread and wine, after enough rebirth, the cell phone, too, wears shards of a flickering god complex. god swipes with the screen brightness turned all the way down, as if holiness permeates through the hollowest of spaces. because he thinks women always remember to leave the light of tinder on. womanhood wears the light like oversized costume and maybe god never knows, never understands how to reveal the dark. how to leave the dark on. god swipes left on me because i do not know how to wear emptied words like a string of declarations. i have run out of light to crucify, and god just keeps swiping.

-Christina Wang



Senior Prom
film photography
Maria Gray
2018



Ross Wheeler Deluge
digital photography
Domi Frideger
2018

All the Good in the World

All the fires in Ventura go out at once
They burned and I blew them out effortlessly;
 a twenty-first birthday candle
A heavy flame that flickered away with one blow
The houses are rebirthed, lift straight from the ash
Brilliant blue tiles line the bathroom sinks and showers
All the kitchens get new ovens,
 each one full of an ever-rising loaf of rosemary ciabatta
 The bread warming the bellies of the bakers
The grass is mowed,
 bluebells are endless
Aqueducts refill; there is never another drought
We will never be thirsty again
The ocean levels settle, the shore is restored to its origins
The Old Croton Aqueduct becomes what I had initially imagined:
a vast bridge of godly, white marble, covered in statues like David
which reflect the sun which burns my cheeks
Mom is close behind with sunscreen
She dots it down my nose and covers my ears,
 giving me shade
She tucks in the tag at the back of my shirt
We buy bell peppers from an old woman at the Irvington farmers market,
 Her crow's feet are deep and I understand why
The day ends like a dream,
 the moon rises and grows thirty-fold
 which lights our faces in pure blue
 now no one can see the hyperpigmentation on my jawline

For the first time ever, I'm not the first to wake up
Not woken up from the bright big sun but a tracing along my spine
I stay under the comforter and open my eyes after him
We make pancakes, I crack the eggs into the bowl
 The yolk an other worldly orange
He whisks the batter
The first one comes out perfectly round and golden -
 a true miracle
I think about every good thing I've ever been a part of
Shape it all into a ball, hold it dear and whole in my palms
I give it to him
 and he melts it on our stack of pancakes

We feast together

-Anna Helms

Someday I'll Love __

after Ocean Vuong

—,
train your eyes on the planes,
the chemical trails, the wrecks
plummeting through a thousand feet
of cold and useless sky. Drain the mouths
you've known, gaping and open
as a wound. Step over the canyons wrapped
in gauze. Consider the bridges you've jumped from
and all the times I've caught you. Call to mind
the water. How it looks unbroken.
—, I don't need to tell you
what it's all about. Sea breaking on the rocks.
Paint peels away from the wall
to which it owes itself.
His fingers pass through you
like a fishhook — there will be life afterwards,
if you are smart. —, be smart.
The mist clears where it meets the mountains
and always, somewhere, someone chips away at something
unfathomable. A feather brushes against the coal
every thousand years. Motionless old friends
collect flies in the kitchen. Here is the sugar bowl.
Here is the cinnamon. Here is the toast
you forgot to eat. The fibers of sweet fruits
make homes between your teeth.
Like the dinosaurs, our bodies
pull us closer to extinction. I, the spine-backed
stegosaurus; you, the meteor
hurling towards my head. Whatever I am now,
I owe it to you. Whatever I am now,
grief remains the mortar. You, the bricks.
You, raised above my head.

-Maria Gray

Raw

I lie and idle in the hugging dirt
waiting for the day's damage to cook off.
Father warned me life would be a hammer,
that time would fissure your polish and poise.

"A Modelo returns vigor," he said.
"It potions against chagrin and sorrow."
Beer slid up the bottle, down his sad mouth.
"Just some advice, before you go your own."

I've been feeling raw: unseasoned, unripe.
Lord, put a direction in me. I've got
nowhere to go and no delivery.
My dull talons at the skirt of the nest.

-Nico Lemus

Haunts

a new purchase: 6 mugs, baring 1950's house-nymphs, captions that speak for them, desert-dry words like *'why I'd be delighted to put my needs last again'* and *'another day in paradise'*; shouts for help directed at an eight-year-old whose thoughts static too fast, who lost far too early the solipsist lens of childhood. She sits in a reddish kitchen, little thighs sticking to the plastic leather of the bench, and practices letting these things fly over her head like half-winged birds. Or she's lying still in a bathtub, the water temperature just beginning to tip into cold, the mossy air of the bathroom seeping across the subway tiles and sitting heavy on her skin, immobilizing. How do you ask a child's mind to stretch itself? Or she's birds-eyeing through her bedframe, something else disguised as fear; her brain grows thick, and very precious. See this child expanding like a lung, her edges soft and firm, like the skin of a peach, *bruuuuising*.

-Anna-Elena Maheu



talking series 1
watercolor and graphite
Mayele Alognon
2018



Untitled
digital photo collage
Laura Nguyen
2018



Untitled
digital photo collage
Laura Nguyen
2018

Sweet Potato

do I microwave jane it would take a minute al dente noodles in a pot take longer maybe ten but this is my microwave that jack bought last year at sears before empty pockets theirs not ours

pressing popcorn maker pressing five minutes pressing one minute pressing quick start no baby in the microwave but holding baby and pressing different times on the shiny black sticky microwave some numbers permanently there not permanently white

I want to microwave my baby but jack would be angry at me if he found out what happened and for this reason I consider keeping jane around even though she takes my sleep and takes my happiness and takes my freedom to walk outside my own front door and have men whistle at me like the construction workers but usually the men in fancy suits were worse because of wolf eyes devouring me to the bone but I still enjoyed I still got attention before jane

jack's fingers would be on sale at Sears they don't even work they are not my microwave they are not hot jack how long would it take you to miss her

I am sitting on deep purple velvet couch belonging to grandma sonja purple and orange were her 2016 colors and then she changed her mind midnight stroke waterloo sunrise into 2017 and then green and blue I never understood how sonja could just change like that

my fitbit beeps and tells me to move. Jerry Garcia tells me to move. Mick Jagger tells me to move.

Not going to work makes me want to eat ice. Chill in the throat chill gut chill girl once someone made me a sign to remind me when jack was being an asshole and I thought about slashing his back right tire with a swiss army pocket knife from my weird uncle who is old and he said he once killed a man with this knife but got away with it because the man had broken into his small two-story house that was so skinny you practically had to suck your gut in when you stepped inside no space to live think eat sleep but space to rip open a criminal's throat trying to eat your goddamn cake but then the cake is ruined anyway because of cranberry juice or maybe a beet smoothie not brown enough but not purple enough for sonja and not crimson enough what is crimson enough.

The neighbor's dog would know immediately and would probably stop accepting my hand and the treats it empties into this dog's mouth I love this dog and I have loved milkbones since third grade math and Mrs. Horton feeding us like animals my god she thought we were deranged eating milkbones so eagerly it was a joke but they weren't terrible and sometimes I

would tear up her playing cards and put them in the toilet and felt bad.

Is my baby a sweet potato? Six minutes for a sweet potato smaller than her. Will her skin wrinkle up and get soft on the outside too? She is practically 90% sweet potato anyways I have steamed thousands of sweet potatoes I have mashed thousands of orange fleshed discarded a thousand skins spooned her thousands of piles of orange mush. Her skin, the immaculate skin of sweet potato, her insides, pools of orange mush. If I ate from her it wouldn't even be cannibalism it would be sweet potato thanksgiving it would be the day of my mother's birth and sonja eating popsicles on thanksgiving and calling every female with our blood a butterball.

Humphrey the dog is my biggest fear because jack I can deal with but rejection from a dog would feel like a frozen tuna slapping my face forever like Minnesota negative seventy degrees and jack and jake and liam coming back from the pond and all fish frozen solid within two minutes and those fish attacking my skin sticking to it peeling it back and then my baby's sweet potato flesh in my jowls and everyone sees and Humphrey would know he would bite my hand and chew it and spit it out with the milkbone because it's too horrible for even Humphrey.

I haven't been to Reno but if I had leaving would be twenty Humphreys running after me one glassy eye times twenty unseeing and jerry Garcia meaning to me an ice cream flavor because of the heat and me not thinking about jane and me being chill and me crying about my sweet potato in the microwave and Humphrey coming closer smelling the dry air I'm not even sure where Reno is, is that burning man is that burnt air is that burnt flesh.

Jane you have killed sleep you bitch gums and all and two seeing eyes that don't see. My watch told me to move and I can't because you pin me down to the couch how can I move with you on my lap my watch told me to move and I can't be who I was before with the baby weight and the no sleep and you always pinning me to things a tack upon the cork board in my room with magazine ads of places like Thailand and new Zealand and Reno I say places like these as though there is a commonality but no just any place but I won't get there I'm just a blanket to cover up what I thought would happen and your teeth growing stick me to board right over dreams.

you don't weigh much but you're heavy and man oh man I'm moving now

tempurpedic you lying whores your ads falsify I demonize you this is me making you a demon this is me telling you game over who is your lawyer good luck court date soon.

I am the type of girl to listen to my teachers who feed milkbones to kids and yes even though cards have been flushed into toilets I got better I did my homework usually I give money to my old school no marijuana in my room no Oleanders growing inside outside around my door no joints in

my bed no none of that timer counting cake coming out of oven bake the good things don't melt don't burn everything cooked too much becomes a sweet potato

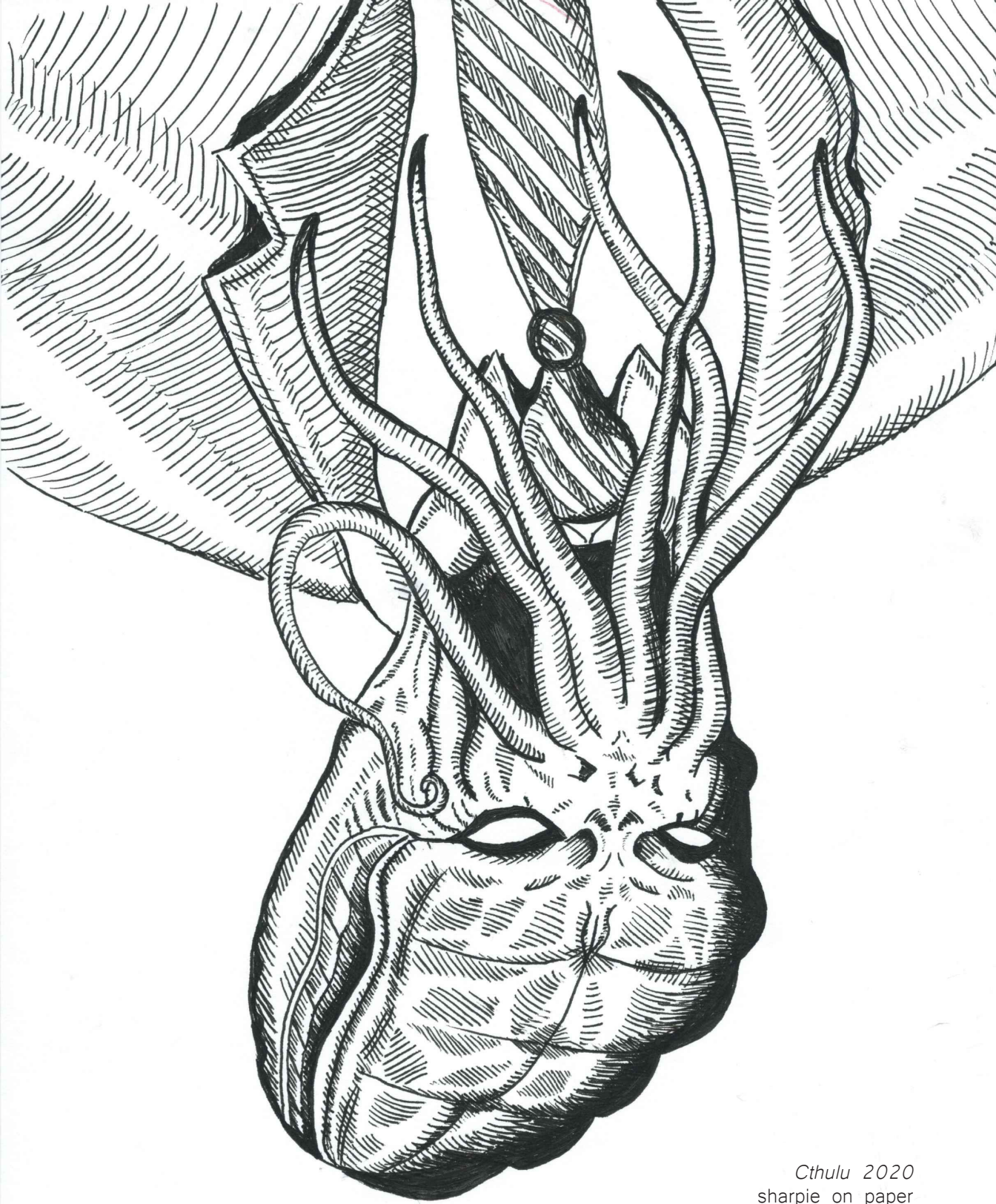
Jane what is your cook time babies don't come with instructions hot water on face burns and I twist and scream could just throw you but the cranberry juice mess no that's not right it's not the right color but it's still a stain and I don't think I could handle seeing you like that somehow in the microwave less bad but you'd burn my fingers alive bury dead buried I need sleep jane I'm so sorry I don't know what to do you don't have any instructions.

Oceanspray is capitalism I think they don't actually stand in cranberry ocean? poison

Three sizes of shoes by the front door before the carpeted staircase leading to outside and catcalls and men why do babies wear shoes you can't walk jane

FIREWORKS on my wrist because 10,000 steps 75% have been going back to the microwave

-Anna Mangum



Cthulu 2020
sharpie on paper
Zander Maitland
2018

dukes

Luxembourgish is a love language not extinct but in fact full of
bus stops and bones
which she wipes down with dish soap. queries
how do you? gives me her heart in Russian so we can be ladies in mourning
in a garden in black together. ich! i murder seven husbands,
i keep a list,

every boy i've met is nice but not like
a woman in a fungal gown firing german-french vowel hybrids with a child in her lap.
she makes ink drawings and marker-carbon cut out creations, shows me clouded leopards
deer heads and rib cages. golden stitched thread around an ellipsis in a bubble,
read read i see you
sunshine honey darling she bakes dog photos out of bees nests
and me into a pie

-Alexandra Teplitz



The White House
digital photography
Sage Reynolds
2018

Sestina: Scratching Silence

A mother sets her toddler, Lyell, down to rest
and walks to the kitchen to put up her feet.
The sink is leaky; drops of water
plunk incessantly on the steel
bowl - a sound that scratches
the inside of the mother's head.

She reclines her head,
letting it fall stiff-limp to rest
on the wooden chair's back. Scratches
from the dog's desperate pleas mark the wood floors at her feet;
he's had to steal
food from the neighbor's cat for a while now - but not water.

That damn leak, however infuriating, provides water
to the dog - the dog whose head
nudges the mother's outstretched leg; it is now too weak to reach the
steel
sink for a lick of water. The mother's rest
never goes uninterrupted - by the dog, by her baby, by the aching of her
feet.
But the dog is oblivious to this plight - he has his own, evidenced by the
scratches.

The mother has become well acquainted with the scratches -
has, on hands and knees, scrubbed them vigorously with a coarse sponge
and water,
in the hopes of eroding the reminder of her neglect - the texture beneath
her bare feet.
Her frustration has come to a head
today, her rest
yet again disturbed by the dog, clawing for the drops on steel.

The mother slowly lowers her foot on the dog's neck, its image reflected
in the bowl of steel.
The emaciated creature scratches,
head craning before succumbing to its final rest.
Silence plagues the kitchen, aside from the water
that plunks, ignorant to the goings on below the counter - cannot see the
dog's head
attached to flattened throat and twitching feet.

The mother releases her foot
from the dog's deflated neck. The steel

bowl continues on collecting plunks of water from the spout head,
and the scratches
once pursued by a determined hand, coarse sponge and water
remain - despite the dog's absence, there they will always rest.

The cold, steel silence scratches
inside the mother's head, and the water still plunks.
Baby Lyell cries, eager to be risen from his rest.

-Becca Havian



Stingray
digital photography
Elliot Wilson
2018



Menara
digital photography
Elliot Wilson
2018

close & personal

the canvases in this aisle are smeared so heavily with oil and attention
that when they flake
lovers and lake towns and whole battalions are lost.
maybe it's jersey, leaf-swept, landmarked hills gleaming,
an all-American landscape, with not quite the living body of Renoir
or the pleasant obfuscation of Seurat.
the spotlight sends glares across brushstrokes & so-and-so
ex-military site of death, unknown venerated town,
is consumed by an external apocalypse. sunspots and burning,
the whole big bang, the trees go up first to a chorus of unconcerned
cow bellows. fences, smaller than matchsticks, fall like matchsticks.
the whole and entire existence of a fictional pasture maid
is worth less than the size of a dime. it's the kind of world you could stick your
nose into.
barnyards tussle with the color balance. the hills: alive. illuminated.
now that's a sort of rust i could get into. no one stares at decay like artists.
no one knows better the kaleidoscope inside a shade of brown.
the frames splinter slower than the wilting of gesso-laden cotton canvas.
stay behind the rope, please, sir,
this is not an appetizer you are allowed to lick.

-Alexandra Teplitz

“why do you always write about being asian”

in my dreams,
my mother teaches me
how to shoplift
secondhand patriotism:
a costume that only engulfs our necks,
a pride everyone has long outgrown.
on a good day,
god is not white.

my mother birthed me in mandarin.
conceived me out of the friction
of her wilted dreams, after the dust of
crossing far too many oceans
to tolerate shitty chinese take-out.
i carved myself out of the womb,
out of a fraud,
molded the umbilical cord around
my mother’s expired fantasies.

we both see it coming when i tell my mother i wished i was white.
girls ask me if i can see with eyes this small, with an accent that torches its own path.
boys tell me i’d be sexier if i could speak their language
like an american.
i fall asleep suffocating on suburban folklore: if it’s dark enough, if our faces are invisible,
my mother agrees that she is exposing us by speaking chinese in public.
if it’s dark enough, my mother teaches me baseball in the backyard until
i bleed into a girl in a country song, back of a muddy pickup,
ivory tower perpetually worth
buying a beer for.

for my birthday, my mother names me “christ follower” in english.
if we forget to turn the dark off,
we glue together fragments of broken mandarin, eroded english,
as if an immigrant has ever been capable
of rebirth.
as if our bodies are ever more than evaporating costume,
perpetually bursting at the seams.

–Christina Wang



Graduation
film photography
Maria Gray
2018

Eating Holy Fire

Maurice Sendak once drew an original Wild Thing on a card for a little boy who'd sent him fan mail. Presumably, it was worth a lot — an original Maurice Sendak drawing —

the boy's mother wrote back, saying, "Jim loved your card so much he ate it." Imagine a world where loving and eating run parallel, train tracks hissing up the hill, headed someplace alive and unproven.

I wouldn't bother mounting the scale. I'd wrestle burn from the bush, push Moses aside, tell him I had this one covered. A blistered throat is a throat that's been loved, I'd say. If you can't swallow light,

what can you swallow? Mortar? Truth? The hoarsest voices belong to those who've sung most. God gnaws at the lining of my stomach. Proverbial truths erode against the acids. Every sweater is made of knots,

and every sweater keeps me warm. My stomach is no different. I do not quite know what to tell you, woman before women, patron saint of musicians. Cecelia, when you sat at your wedding and sang alone to God,

did you expel music or bile? When you tasted metal, was it the sword or your own blood, temperature the only difference between them? Your body, incorruptible. Your last meal spoils inside you. They say you appear to be sleeping.

-Maria Gray

almond extract

remember when i was a carpet kid?
how i trampled our ottomans and picked
wispy creatures out of the stitched-up wounds
on the armchair.
you pushed me around in a cardboard box with the cat
and i let you get full tired before
challenging you to a game of Almond Extract.*
remember i'd take that triangular prism off the sill
and go giddy looking at an upside-down
version of the living room.
too-big eyes pressed against a different world all afternoon.
too-big heart for that squirming body.
you looked at me with so much care i thought
i might be extraordinary,
thought i'd become some rare living thing
if i only kept on loving the most
ordinary parts of our living room.

* in which you had the better hands for holding almonds
and i the better hands for scooping them out

you were belly-laughing proud when i
named it this.

-Olivia Gomez



The Memory Project
graphite, tea and watercolor
Mayele Alognon
2018



Chisos
digital photography
Elliot Wilson
2018
graphy
Elliot Wilson
2018

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