

On Friday She Contemplates Loneliness

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It's just an ache. Which is to say, today, upon waking, I fit all my love in a backpack and realized I could carry it. The fact of the matter is trapezoidal and won't sit well enough to hold me — an ethnography of lines around the mouth which is not feeling out a breath but is whispering, *come home*. As if home is the down-the-corner shop with two for five Martinelli's. As if home might divide itself under naked hands like segments of almost-gone fruit. As if home isn't lonely also, isn't sprouting some dark-tendoned howl. The shape of the thing is crooked: juts an elbow into a tea-cart on a plane, teasingly jaunts ankle and then knee and then thigh from out beneath a velvet skirt. It's not about filling me up, it's the process of trying to un-empty me. As if one might shove the storm back into the cloud and keep it there, as if one might unhusk the corn, and un-creak the floor, and un-cold the blue room once he leaves it. Like when we are babies, and don't feel that a face can stay existing when it moves out of sight. Like the gerund necessitates the act. What must be done is done: I loved once and then again. It fell out of me until little was left. It lumbered towards a face and another and another until it didn't want to grow back, or go on asking for change, begging for a day to turn into a year and a year a night to swallow without choking in askance. I want to clear the ache with the singular dinner dish. But it squats fat and low like it knows how an ache can be beautiful, how some hurts can bend and flex into use only when the house is warm again.