

Suddenly, we're in your car, and it feels like nothing has changed. The town only had one stoplight, and it flashed a cool, fleeting yellow only a hundred feet or so front of us. We knew what came next; You tucked the gas pedal beneath the floor mat until it stuck, and then crossed your legs. You reclined your seat all the way back, looking at the roof, making up stories about where that dark stain came from. I watched that yellow light, and imagined I was some arbitrary gear in a telescope, zooming into the intersection. It was yellow as it danced up the windshield, until it wasn't. We had failed to clear the intersection before the light flashed red. We were technically dead. You pretended not to notice.

When I was 7 and you were 8, we would run along this same road to the news station, with five dollar bills that we held with tight fists. Children could pay for rides on the helicopter they use for the morning traffic report. We held hands, and you told me boys could be princesses too, which I thought was grand. The helicopter ascended, I saw how unremarkable our town was. It looked as though it were buried under the earthy quilt of farmland. You got incredibly sick, and we had to land early. That's why you don't take planes to visit me.

When we became men, we found the power between our legs, and came to understand it as something divine.

And now, several revelations. I live a recycled dream, in a city not big enough to be worth anything but not small enough to walk. I don't have a car, I take the bus. The businesswoman sitting next to me, whose tummy spills out from her blouse knows nothing of the love I know, and neither does the young schoolboy in front of me with headphones clasped over his ears. There is no admiration in it, precious metals lose their luster. There is no obligation, widows find comfort in books and big ideas. There is only the cultivation, which I never bothered with. All my houseplants are dying. Yet I grew you, didn't I? In my office, with glass walls or windows, I think of the word *home*. It does not conjure up images of dirty summer porches, or the baseball dugouts we got high in, or the bedroom I lost my virginity in before I knew I didn't like girls. I see the streetlight, and it blinks a soft orange telling me to slow down. You're in the passenger's seat, with such a beautiful sorrow that you carry on your lip. We drive slow through the mist, and an 18-wheeler, miles away, will hit us head on. I am aware of this death and it gives me life.