

## **Strawberry Roses**

Blind stripes of morning sun; coral roses in my bedroom are the sweetest domestication-  
Though red and white columbine grows at my windowsill and this is my heart's bitter favorite.

It is naked-on-the-beach weather and my popsicle and lips are mango flavored,  
glossed with sugar.

Bright orange matches my ocean hair and reminds me of juice bursting from flesh with a sweet  
spice from the islands

Where I am not allowed to visit abuelita

## **Tillamook**

I awake and my mouth tastes like the sea

I remember a little cabin by the water

Where pheasants come in the spring and we eat them in the summer

Where there are reeds by the bank and the river runs red and yellow with speckled bellies

We wore plaid and denim, sandals and bare feet

Met the cows who gave us our ice cream-

Invasive blackberry just as I am

Thorny and thick, but sweet under the august sun

You are saltwater Taffy, sticking to my teeth long after I've had you

Filling my mouth with that ocean sweetness I haven't had since I was a teenager

I awake and my mouth tastes like the sea.

## **I Am Ana**

The first thing I am aware of in the morning is the long growl of my stomach, and yet;  
I will not feed it until evening.

I hunger for flesh in the reddest sense;

Sex and roasted chicken are my safe foods

Nicotine and caffeine do me one better

I carve away five pounds of myself every week,

As if less of my body means more of me

This is not the most beautiful I will ever be

I am cheekbones and jawline, lips and eyes

My collarbones are the thin branched perches of sparrows

And for this I eat once a day

For dainty white cotton dresses and slender braceleted wrists,

I dream of bread that will never pass my lips

### **Airport Poem**

You are the owner of all my organs and I am gutted  
Crying again in the airport as we part because I am allowed less than persephone's lot;  
We part and I again I am penelope, my patience no virtue but a forced hand  
I fold this turn into my airplane seat, knees to chest and eyes fevered and wet.  
There is a layer of wool over dallas,  
a weeping blanket of cloud and I wish dearly  
for gin,  
though I cannot afford the hangover, for-  
As my flight takes off I am already heart sick

### **What walks**

Brother, do you believe?  
I stand at the pulpit and preach- Oh Lord above  
Do you believe in what lives in the cornfield  
And why we don't go there after dark?  
Brother do you believe?  
I stand in the waters and preach  
Dark waters where alligator turtles live  
And catfish mermaids lurk  
They get bigger than you think.  
Oh brother, I say, do you believe?  
Do you know why we say not to leave the safety of the porch light  
when you hear your name from the dark?  
Brother I tell you that church has been abandoned for good reason  
No souls can be saved there anymore  
No joyous shouts can be heard in the rafters, only birds  
Kudzu now owns the doorway and half the pews  
And the devil walks with his white hat, asking  
Brother, oh Brother, do you *believe*?