

HIP, HIP

## ONTOLOGICAL OBITUARY #1

She often thought about how other people filled their ice cube trays: all at once, at a tilt and with a cascade of water, or one-by-one from the faucet with factory precision.

She changed her name to Sonny, then Sonni, then Son, then So.

She only ever learned to tie her shoes one way, the wrong way, which she called the bunny-ear method.

She once chopped off most of her hair, then counted the years it would take to grow back, and how old she'd be when it did.

She stopped at lemonade stands on principle.

She never knew if *necessary* had two s's or two c's.

She wrote a lot of letters that she never sent.

The moments of greatest joy she shared with no one.

None of her houseplants outlived her.

THE STATE OF THINGS

*for Tyler*

We went to bed alone like we would tomorrow night  
and the night after that and for every night until we died,  
try as we would to change the way the world was.  
I opened the window for the company of the breeze  
and to raise the stakes of staying warm and pulsing,  
wet inside. Outside the cars sung songs on the road.  
A siren wailed about the state of things and I thought of blue-  
black glass, the James in May, and you slipping under the river.  
Two years have slid by since then, unwound their cords around  
my feet. I'm steeped in it, seeing my own reflection in the bits  
of glass that hid behind the couch, seeing you in every  
good-looking kid with a grin. Here we are and aren't.  
You with a heart so big and carved of stone, sinking.  
Me with time at my feet like crumpled jeans. There aren't  
enough life vests to go around. I didn't know until now  
what it meant to dance, drenched in wind, with the imprint  
of your words silk-screened on my skin, drowning.

## THINGS I NEVER CALLED YOU

Chicken, duckie, cutie. Sweetheart or a real good fuck.  
I never said I love you but it lived in my eyes when I looked at you,  
looking away, love. My darling. Darling dearest.  
My seven-year-itch with a cape of dark hair, which sometimes  
was stringy with grease. God. I never said you were a freak,  
not in a good way, or in a bad way, or in bed. Some days, babe,  
I was just too tired to not come see you. Baby girl, baby doll, pork chop.  
You unwove my clothes, *m'ija*. You sewed the threads right into the ground.  
When I woke up, darling, sown in your city, I saw that your hands  
were just covering up mine all along. Silly goose. I saw that the city  
was beautiful, beautiful. I'm sure that I called you beautiful, once.

## PERMANENT INTERNMENT

### I. Things you can buy:

A statue of a zombie, towels with pockets, infrared flashlights to relieve pain, ass-enhancing panties with removable padding, sprayable hair, a laser projector that bathes any building in flecks of green lights. A box emitting laughter, a bunion reducing foot brace, bean seeds that sprout with a message on their leaves, a pillow that always stays cool. Mole removing skin balm, a UV-disinfecting wand, a soothing sleep machine, a self-rinsing square of sod for your dog to shit on, a 3-step system that trains cats to use a human toilet. A plush silk casket. A 3D printer. A crystal ball.

### II. Things you can't buy:

A 3-step system that trains humans to use kitty litter, laughter, applause, a clock with time you have left to live, a watch that won't someday stop ticking, a quiet night in late July when you are 10 years old and see fireflies for the first time, all the pieces of hair that have ever fallen off of your head. A 4D printer, rocks that look like speakers, a bunion, a puppy that won't become a dog, a zombie, a cat that becomes a kitten, pain, painlessness, sleep, the sky, an alternative to permanent internment, a crystal ball that works.

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At some point her hands became hands.  
It spread: legs legs, ribs ribs, a hip a hip.  
Eight lips lips, all kissing.  
We became a pile of parts on a bed,  
lefts and rights, rights and wrongs,  
creamy white un-sun-touched, limber, limp,  
one foot wrapped in a damp magazine  
like a pile of deli meat, left out in the heat,  
beaded with sweat, dripping.