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Teeth

I follow you back to your house
Hidden by shadows cast
On an elm lined cement path
You remain ignorant
Of my presence here.
I watch the last of the sunrays peak over the horizon
Out on the countryside.
Chuckling heaps of sod over my shoulders
Clearing out the dirt and roots.
A storm sits on the precipice of the east wind
Rolling in with forked tongues.
Pellets of rain fall as
Clouds empty their bellies
And I stand here, atop a mound
Listening for sirens.
I heard that you like teeth
So I pulled mine out for you.
You string my teeth with coarse hemp
Silver, gold, and broken bits
And what I've given up remains
A scar upon my face.
I cannot help but smile
At teeth wound round your neck
Like barbed wire on deadwood posts.

Trey Moss

The Past in a Dream (an excerpt)

A sparrow clings to the cornice of the wooden ceiling. It is looking down at a middle aged Japanese woman, tilting its head back and forth curiously. From this angle, the bird can only make out a partial profile. The woman's hair runs far below her shoulders. She tucks it behind her ear while the sparrow watches. Drops of dark freckles blot her cheek and even spiral into the inside of her ear. She sits at a desk pushed against an opening in the wall. The air is still. No one has entered the shop today. Behind her, there is a bucket of water filled with wiggling eels. The hand written sign propped against the bucket reads "Fresh Unagi." The eels seem excited, but the woman just sits at her desk peering through the window at the empty countryside. The bird wants to know what she's thinking. Its eyes see things more roundly and without color. To the bird, the woman's face looks puffy and grey. The outlines of the objects in the room seem stretched as if they were printed on plastic wrap and pulled tightly at both ends.

Light footsteps break the pervading silence and the sparrow darts out the window. The view returns to normal. The woman turns toward the doorframe and spies a sleeping baby cradled in the armored arms of a samurai.

Lucas Khan

May

Before grade school
Before Shakespeare
Before divorce
Before football and pianos,
There was you
And there was me
Sitting in a cliché sandbox
While our cliché parents
Watched from the window
And made cliché, plans
For our future.
Your name, May, was the word
I had come to use
For the sun and breeze
And pregnant sheets
On my mother's clotheslines.

Before bicycles
Before mono
Before religious upheaval
Before unrequited, suicidal
Middle school love,
There was you
And there was sand --
Clumps of it
Hot top-sand mixed
With cool, viscous

Sand from below
Where our toes
Moved and touched.
And there was a comingling
Of daylight and leaves
That made patterns of dark
And light across your face.

Before heartbreak
Before abortion
Before any awareness
of lack
There was you.
And the hint of something
Different
That wasn't me
But was me And was airy, sacred
Feminine.
A feeling to match
The wind and bobbing flowers
Of your namesake.

And after years of not seeing you,
Though you never knew the name of my dog
Or the school I barely graduated from
Or the artistic struggles I have
And haven't had --
Those sacraments of soft dresses

And scattered hair,
The mysteries of colored nails
And sunlight
Will always live in the eternity
Of hellos and goodbyes
Of those who could never compete.

Brian MacNeal





Apartment Ten Thirteen

Here is where we rested our heads,
And banged rituals on the headboard.
Our love chamber caked in bland whites,
and thrift store décor. Such luxury!
A room that deserves quarantine.
The atmosphere thick with angst,
failure, and carpets soaked in sweat.
Ah! The memories stored in rug burn.
With a swarm of leases and cleaners,
the landlord wants to erase the pain.
I was a bastard fueled by fear.
You became disillusioned by better days.
You drowned in wine on Saturday,
and awoke on Sunday cursing me.
I denounced your name in verse.
Angered by my memories of you.
I wanted you to love what I couldn't: me.
Only to chant your excellence while fucking.
Please let the world know of our fall from grace.
And my futile attempts to save face.

Brandon Hodges

Autobiography:

“A North Carolina native, Angela Fruzzetti moved here to continue her dreams, and be a successful hair and makeup artist. Along the way she saw Atlanta through a lens for the first time. Appreciating and taking it all in, she wanted to share it through her eyes for anyone to appreciate. Her new passion has created love and appreciation of all art.”

-Angela Fruzzetti

“My name is Trey Moss. I live in Athens, Georgia. I drink excessively.”

-Trey Moss

“My name is Brian MacNeal.”

-Brian MacNeal

“I guess if you like it, you can put it in. Just let me know.”

-Matt Phejlada

“I put in our new editor’s story in the journal one more time because our audience requested it. Since Lucas published his first poem with us, we’ve had dedicated readers constantly asking to see more of his work. Your wish has been granted.”

-Vanessa Escobar on Lucas Khan

“Not a fan of small talk.”

-Brandon Hodges