

otherland

they find her shivering stained t-shirt over wild bare legs

in an alley my mother's body in the shape

of unknown food chewed by a scatter of teeth

I never saw her mud-matted fishing-wire hair but

my brother offers to send me the picture he took of her when

he showed up like a heart attack that day that

gathered into years when she was

lost a child with the senior's special

schrödinger's mom dead (not dead)

her missing body chiseled to ice under a bridge every time

it snowed *No* I hear myself say *leave me*

*my memories of her before she ate dumpsters without underwear*

*spare me the mouth that once spun my lullabies*

*when she was all bare-footed earth-skulled lunulae*

*I have so little little girl in me left*



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my mother knew my name the one she gave me

talked to me same as her father gone ten years now

seen him last week in her ceiling

*I need to tell grandpa the birds oh I forget their names*

*are waiting for their packages of weather*

*and string and blue china dishes the ones we use on*

*easter he knows the one*

I am with you now, mother, feeding you five cheese ziti from olive garden while

a woman frothing at the head rocks and screams your broken

stare two eyes two punched out windows one for each vanished son

you hallucinate the only way to get them to visit you

ice in my sockets melting down my cheeks I leave you in a confusion

happier than truth punch the code steel doors open leads to the first

thread of hallways past motionless wheelchairs bouquets of piss

neurotic light bulbs flickering dark in this cement palace

where you will die in the corner next to a phone that never rings

a folder squeezing a single slip of paper with my name

date and time in small handwriting that proves

that *yes, mommy* *I saw you*

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a woman in muted scrubs asks me if I am your daughter

tells me you are her favorite that you write me letters

backwards in the swatch of window near your bed

because you say I live in the tree outside your forever room

you write to me like a child on a fogged car window messages

to a passing stranger speeding down an unpainted

highway because grandpa visits you in the sky

but I,

I live in your tree

