

# Martyr

by Amber G. Christensen

I am smoking Jakarta cloves at this bar.  
My glass bleeds into the coaster.

The waitress says,  
“That’s a memory,”  
as the smoke dances around her head.  
It’s a lighted halo,  
a reminiscent sketch  
of the holy one’s mother, my mother,  
a bitter taste in my mouth.

In a place such as this,  
The scenes are all the same.  
They are mapped out in my head,  
So familiar.  
I believe it—for a second—  
like the way the drink makes me feel,  
the way the cloves turn me into something sensuous,  
the way your words are deciphered in my mind  
illuminating my soul, sipping blood from my pores.

I’ll sleep in your bed tonight  
Trying to discover if it’s truth or more lies.  
My crown will ache  
and I’ll wonder if it’s you or me  
who pushed the thorns in more  
on account of reality.

