

Portrait

by Cooper Renner

I'm young. Remember that. Nobody's idea of plump.

I can show my teeth at will, but then the sudden sensation of falling hits: like when the wind catches the paper and lifts it off the corner of the desk and past your fingers; like that last second just before the earthquake, when the lunch pail knows it's going to jitter, but hasn't started it yet; when the birds give their fabled alert, and the leaves are full of the snarls of their scatter, the cry we all make when she abandons us.

Come on, Satchmo, gimme a drink. Call it lunch, call it takeout, call it the sum of my achievements. I'm way past you already, way into the untruth I'm taking on board. Yes, that one, that it's all about the failure of desire.

Hers or mine?

You figure it out, jackass.

I'm sticking my oar in your game of charades here. One word, two syllables. Entiendes? You call the lawyer.

