

Concentric

by J.A. Pak

In mid dream, mid journey, there's a barrier we must cross, flat and vast like an ocean. We're told the barrier is a monster. To cross the barrier we must maim one of its eyes. There, rising to the surface is half a large sphere—the eye. The eye turns into a tiny monster: round little head, round little body, with two round eyes, one of which is decorated with concentric circles. The monster is as adorable as any toy you'll ever see. The only way to maim its eye is to throw a round ball at it. We keep missing. The little monster, lying flat on its back, watches the tossed balls. Thinking we're playing a game together, it laughs and laughs with joy. Mid laughter we attack, savagely butchering not one but both its eyes. The little monster is stunned, confusion and shock frozen on its face. Horror floats through every layer of consciousness.

