

Pushing of Thumb

by James Claffey

The MacArthur avocado sits heavy on the counter, its skin thin as an old scar, waiting to be sliced open. I push my thumb into its flesh, soft and yielding, and think about the space between what's visible and what's not. Outside, a garden spider works the morning air, its body slow and steady as it builds, thread by thread, an invisible map of patience. I hear the almost hum of its effort in the quiet of the garden, the way the spider knows the weight of the world without asking for anything. The dry leaves, brittle in the breeze, scuttle across the yard like forgotten stories, curling and spinning in the wind, their crisp edges brushing against the earth as if they're trying to remember something they once knew. A flash of light splits the sky—a launch from nearby Vandenberg AFB, a trail of fire and possibility, climbing toward the unknown. It's impossible not to feel the way it pulls at something inside you, a promise of escape, of reaching beyond the limits we've placed on ourselves. But as I stand there, watching the leaves scatter, the spider spin, the avocado softening in my hands, I wonder if the real magic is in the waiting, in the stillness between the launches, the climbs, and the unraveling. It's the way everything is always moving, always becoming, even when it seems as though nothing is happening at all.

