

# your notorious youth

*by* Jerry Ratch

By what fictitious rib were you ever pulled out of your notorious youth, ever? Out of the early flower of your flesh, once on fire like a little vibrant reed with pure air, like a flute with wind getting up inside it?

But already there's a long way to go to get to the soul of night. An infinite progression from daylight to night. Cerulean blue caught somewhere between them, not knowing which way to look.

If ever you were in my underwear, you were the one. My panties were on fire for you. You could pull them off me anytime you wanted, anywhere you wanted. That would have been me flying nearby as you settled on any branch of heaven in the peaceable kingdom, or even flying down a long and winding tunnel to escape whatever darkness surrounded you, to get to the other side of loneliness. I would always be able to find you. You wouldn't even have to look back.

You have no idea the purity you caused on my insides. I have always marveled at the words forming on your lips, your tongue, your soul, like fine droplets of dew. And I am still there, inside you, like a bubble of sleep. Like the forgetfulness of a wish.

