

Jukebox Genesis

by John Olson

Why is it so hard to start something? A conversation, a sauce, a correspondence. There is a teleology to swallow. One becomes Quixotic. One must renounce the place where one has become settled and sure and risk the hazards of destiny and fortune. There is nothing sadder than a dream in formaldehyde. The fossils embedded in limestone haunt the imagination with ancient beginnings which have since developed into ears and vertebrae. Vowels emerge from the clash of syllables and shoulder the primal life of the piccolo. All commencements diversify into adjectives and cantaloupes. We accommodate the veins of a swirling philosophy. Once something starts, there is no telling where it will go. This is particularly true of paragraphs. This paragraph, for instance. It wants to be a belt buckle. But I refuse to let that happen. I will stand in the way of this paragraph. I began this paragraph, and I will end this paragraph. It is mine to guide. It is mine to cultivate. Nevertheless, when it ends, as all things do, I don't see a paragraph. I see a fountain of words answer to the ghostly embryo of a belt buckle. I see a ghostly embryo step into the nerves of being and jump into a jukebox and narrate the genesis of a kiss. And I strain to get out of this paragraph. This paragraph in which a needle has come down into my back and scrapes a song out of it.

