

# Sacred

by Meg Worden

"What the fuck are you looking at, Carl?" She snaps, turning her head toward me as the truck edges off the road and into a field of tobacco, into those broad green leaves of ancient sacristy and modern ablution. This is not a blissful kind of field. It is not full of lavender or lillies or light. The goddamn Indians are long gone.

"Best look the other way" she warns, her bare hands sweating all over the steering wheel, her twisted mouth dry with slivers of red lipstick still in the cracks. It looks like her pout has burst into flame, has become a fount of hot red lava.

She spits when she talks and I want to tell her to keep her saliva to herself. I think I'm hilarious but I don't feel like laughing. Instead I pull my hat down my forehead, feel the plastic rim scrape my skin and wish it could scrape out the memories. Her peppermint smooth skin has turned into thick mortar, her eyes have gone as black as greek olives, as black as her fury. She could tell by my questions, by the way I burnt the toast and splattered bacon grease all over my shirt that I knew.

The engine hesitated, just slightly when we hit the boulder. I think about the tip of my tongue between her legs, spread wide on the countertops of this mortal kitchen, this unknown bedside. How she used to drizzle her rhythm and rain all over my whiskers. Nobody's ever accused me of not being quick on my feet. I'm as sly as a goddamn snakecharmer.

I remind her as much, tell her I got her fucking number as my foot crosses the console to press down on the gas pedal. We hit that next dip like one of those meteorites they keep saying is gonna destroy us all and I watch her flying all slow and delicate, shimmy-ing through shards of slick glass and air, her limp torso and that beautiful ass that will always be mine.

