

# Tincture

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I never really liked church

even though the stained glass was beautiful

and shone in the sun from angles zero to three sixty

tanning our faces when we left service and

banishing the darkness, or so the minister said.

I never really liked church,

even though the youth group had little finger snacks

and I felt like a rich lady with a feathered coat

that was just large enough to hide the bruises in.

Like pinpricks from a needle,

if needles could talk and move and see

and crush and grab

and hate; intense like a blaze

licking up at me with a roiling anger because I wasn't so easy to control

gripping me, setting my nerves off like fireworks

leaving marks like the associated strontium scarlet

blooming across my skin and blocking out the sun,

leaving me in the darkness that was supposed to have gone.

I never really liked church,

and there's a very certain freedom one gets from leaving

holding a shard of the symbol withing my palm,

sable, gules

now obscured by my knuckles and smashed between my fingers,

glass being carried away by the torrent of red

blood without the body.