

Spanish, Ontario

Olivia Lucca Fraser

2021-06-10

Abstract

A revision, or something closer to a rewrite, of a poem I'd published in 2014 in The Electric Encyclopedia of Experimental Literature (EEEL), now sadly defunct, under the title "If You're a Woman and You Feel Like This When You're Alone at Night, It's not Just You". The title came from a clickbait poetry exercise suggested somewhere on surrealist poetry tumblr. A fun scene. Seemed funny at the time.

So, I considered the anemone and considered its syllables, and considered the way they decayed in my mouth. They're not bird seeds. It's not a passerine's beak. It's not a nuthatch, sealed in a jar that weeps with humidity, a jar that even now I'm lifting from the shelf but *will* fall. It'll slip and it will smash into pieces, eventually. The jar's heavy and my hands? Incoherent at best. The asphalt'll off-gas and you'll be able to smell it, like you can from the desk at the motel. The motel in Spanish, Ontario. The motel clerk looks like my grandfather's girlfriend, so she comped us the double and ignored the anemone.

So I gave her a name and I crawled in her beak. She was a bird or invertebrate, but I can't remember. I do remember pressing my flesh into curls. They were brittle or boneless, but I can't remember. I pressed on the lid from below. I know I remember the lid. It was rubberized ring-locked and perfectly perfectly still. My hands wept. The glass wept with humility. Lake Huron, from the parking lot, wept. They comped us the double and wept.

So, I'm able to sleep without falling. My feet end in wires that twist around branches and keep me in place until New Year's. You know sleep is coming, anemone. The first day you bled you were certain. The first time you braided your hair. Sleep is not a jar. Sleep is the enemy's well-threaded ring.

The original version of this text can still be found on an archived page from the EEEL.