

Cassie Ciopryna

Cherries

She sat at her desk eating cherries, spitting the pits into the pail while he thumped his feet onto the coffee table,

scratching at his chest. *They look like human body parts, you know* she said and he stopped his fingernails mid-scratch.

The pits, I mean, she said and pulled another off its stem with her teeth. She chewed and spit the next one at him, the same she usually spewed

words at him like *fuck you* or *fuck me*. He preferred the latter. The small pit left a maroon print on his belly. *See the red?*

Like disheveled organs. Her eyebrows raised as she popped another one in. He traced the pit and its cherry remnants along his lips then into his mouth, sucking off the leftovers.

That Would Be the Cure

Moon-eyes, glazed and dripping
into my ocean tides. Stardust

scattering onto waves and sparkling
on my shore. Sometimes you need

to purge yourself of all of it, leak
meteors out of your skin onto mine;

bury your droplets in my crevices.
I'll hold you, your spot in the sky

never wavering unless you allow
yourself to fall into the depths of me.

Getting It

Maybe it's when your foreign yoga instructor
slightly realigns your arm, tells you to take a deep

breath, and as you sink lower into position whispers,
"See? Isn't that beautiful?" Or maybe it's slow-dancing

in a dive bar in Studio City on your first date, his Irish
accent telling you about black and white movies he watched

as a kid while you slowly turn in circles, hands clasped.
Perhaps it happens on a Sunday afternoon—

scurrying from a rattlesnake sound on a hike, laughing
and trying not to slide down in the dirt. Or maybe

it's when you are running on the sidewalk on your street
and you fall, scraping your knee and your palm into what you

refer to as your own *stigmata* (whether people are offended
by your joke or not). You recall how you first you thought it was

when you drove alone

down the Pacific Coast Highway and a monarch caught itself under
your windshield wiper, wings flailing with the 50mph winds as you panicked

through every green light until finally you reached red and it slid
down to the ground, exuding death.

Cassie is a New England native turned California girl. She loves unicorns, singing in the car, corgis, hiking, and hates dolls. She has previously been published in other journals such as *Drunk Monkeys*, *Adanna*, *Wicked Banshee Press* and more. She is the poetry editor for *FORTH Magazine*, and a regular contributor for *Never Liked It Anyway*.