

Waterbug

The whole house turns to sand.
I imagine myself in the bath, pale blue tiles mounted with browning grout
They warp and shift on the walls.
The yellow tub flashes his stained and jagged smile at me.
I feel uncomfortable under his gaze, bringing my knees to my chest,
the skinned caps of them red and angry
in stark contrast with my pale skin, veins peeking through it
The fluorescent lights hum in the ceiling and flicker on and off,
I find solace in those moments of darkness.
The tub goes to sleep after the water turns cold
I release my legs, let my head dip below the water,
squeezing my eyes shut as hard as I can.
The water muffles all but a small tap, tap, tap
On the tepid surface of the water, breaking surface tension
The Waterbugs footsteps slam into the water.
I watch carefully as he surveys my skin
Goosebumps raise on my shoulders and collarbone under his gaze.
The tub wakes up but I do not move,
The Waterbug is still observing me.
I try to learn him,
how his skin is hard and how his fingers stretch out
letting his body rest on the yellow water.
I wonder if he notices how fragile my skin is
As it starts to prune, turn white, and get loose around my bones.
I want to step out of it, but he is still watching
So I drown him, my skin fitting like loose gloves around my hands and cheeks.
He is hard to grab so shove my hand into the water.
I scream at him to swim while I push my hands down on top of him
Pausing to push my flesh like sleeves up my arm.
I hit and splash the water, sending it over the edge.
The tub yells at me and I yell back
I am screaming and writhing and the bug will not die.
I gasp for air and sand fills my lungs, hot and fast.
When I scream it tears its way down my throat, trying to shove its way down.
It turns into shingles from my roof in my mouth
Splinters of wood in my lungs.
I throw up my house, the dust of the drywall drying out my tongue.
I climb on top of the rubble around me.
My body is soaking wet
And the Waterbug is crawling on a wood plank.
I step on him with my bare foot,
He stabs into the sole.