

Hymnal

I had a pocketknife once.
Back when I was not much older than you are.
I cut my thumb the first time I closed it. The second time I closed it I cut the other.
It slept on the windowsill beside my pillow. It was precious. Like a secret
that sat in plain sight. Every fall the leaves would turn brown
and the wind would sweep them south to the gulf. Every spring they would return
with the geese and with the grasshoppers in their mouths.
In winter I drew on the frost of the glass.
In summer I ate popsicles on the front steps. Every night I would pray.
Not for things or people but for whatever power that turned
the machinery of earth and stars, to make of my heart a lamp,
glowing with light. I raced a crawfish. I had a birthday cake
with dinosaurs on it. My mother marked my growth in pencil
on the doorframe. My eyes were dark and wet marbles.
And they traveled with me, back and forth,
between this world and others.

Anis Mojgani

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