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Washing Day

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Washing Day

It's washing day, my mother used to tell us, when the clouds bowed low to the horizon and shielded the mountains from our wondering gaze, tossing a silvery haze over the morning like the chiffon scarf she would drape over our lamp at night. And the sea seemed eternal; or perhaps it was the grey sky that rinsed the salt from the barnacled beach. Or perhaps that one fine line of a horizon divides one great expanse from itself. I sometimes, often, asked if she was *sure* the mountains would come back. She promised me *yes, sweetheart*, and she was always right. At night I would dream of an endless ocean, and sometimes the mornings still taste of salt.