

## Chicken Painting Hung on the Wall of My First Grade Class

I grew up among absences. empty spaces where people should have been. I only ever see my relatives on Facebook but in the heartbreaking way, as in they comment that I am beautiful in a language I will never learn properly. I take this to mean I will never be able to spell beautiful in the right language. I have lost so much & all of it sits right between my brows. women see it in my eyes. the absence. I try to extrapolate the empty. I will never be this old again. I have back pains now & diagnoses decorated in chronic mink. how to live a body that is already breaking. the doctor prescribes me omeprazole & I take this to mean all the old gods are vying for residence of my guts. I have a sinus issue. (my grandmother is taking a nap.) the pain is always there. I just sing it differently. sometimes I touch things. a jar of glitter. a lung of bread. I sourdough sashay. sometimes I dislocate my elbows to calm my nerves. today I found out I grind my canines in my sleep. even unconscious I file away at my teeth. sometimes I run out of electricity & there's just me & my mislabeled elbows. sometimes when it is really bad I go somewhere quiet & chlorophyll rich. it doesn't help much but often at night there is a moon. I think a lot about how my mother had a canary who died in the neighbor's cat's mouth. the day I ululated him out his cage I started seeing shadows in mirrors. I see the dead. I see the dead & they are bored.