

KATIE CLARK

YOU WERE A DANDELION IN 1998

u were a dancer before this,

but i've only seen it in moments:

in partial breaths and your knobbed ankles, your
concern in me seeing them, your footwork in the kitchen
reaching up for the olives,

and the cupboards closed,

and my body opened

in ways i want to understand.

you met me with

hands around my neck, you met me

with dish cloths in my mouth,

and now we are lying in bed and i am almonds
and tangerines and small rabbits and i want to know

what time it is in you.

there are so many moths in rhode island,
last night i went out and
buried a jar of sugar in your backyard and
i woke up with wet hands.
it was so cold in your bedroom

i remembered where
we left last summer:
with the pink peppercorns and sand pears
spilling train-side as we climbed to the top.
how i dripped down you,
puddled into weak knees,
padding down the stairs in the holed straw hat,
your palms pressed to every moment of me.
how wrong it felt to put on my funeral dress afterwards.
how right to have you take it off,
how i seeded in the taking,
became noon in the jaw of your lemon spit,
in the bluets under the evergreens,
the room with the copper pots hanging,
the copper spilling,
how still it all felt with the lights off.

and you were nervous of my hands

k,n,o,t,t,e,d

in my sleep,

of the dish towels,

the

swallow

swallow

swallowing i did of them.

but the one you bought my mother

is slung over my shoulder now,

pretty and blue and blue

and i am picking red limes and

thinking of your hip bones.

i want to tie the yellow ribbons

around your finger but the petals

are too soft.

instead, copper aftertaste,

snow in your sneakers.

my throat is clean;

i am trying to stop remembering.

follow me, i want to show you something.

with your peppermint oiled, runny nose,
under a blanket
covered with birds)
(it's this small quiet thing i get to be a part of)

it is you, dancing,
it is you, in 2017,
a dandelion.