

Séance at the dinner party

Uncle asks if I teach minorities. Brother is dead. Yes I do. Cousin asks if any boys hit on me. Uncle tells me to smile. Cousin says how about any girls. Haha. Says she's kidding. Brother is dead. Women in the kitchen. Men anywhere else. Someone's neighbor's daughter is a queer. Woman says Oh Lord. The lights flicker. No, really. The lights in the dining room flicker. Brother is dead. Grandma burns the green beans. How is that even possible. Have coffee. Break ice on the concrete. Brother is dead. Dad takes his blood pressure when someone says fag. Snaps the wishbone in my favor (under the table). Remember her hands on my spine. Open palmed. My stomach. Feel small. Feel like Eden's masochist. Uncle asks if I'm mad. Brother is dead. Say no. See clear into the barrel of a gun. No, really. Someone is cleaning a gun on thanksgiving. Feel huge like Alice. Great uncle asks if what I teach is woke. Ex military. The room fits on my thumbnail. Bitten off. Think about marrying her. How empty the rows would be. How full the trees. How small I would feel. How like Eve, grinning and satisfied. Sit grief in my hand and watch it dance. Call up grandpa. The dead one. Brother. Their same faces. Consider shattering their plates against the window but they're the plastic kind. Sectioned off. Their love drapes from my body like fine robes. Sloughs away like egg white from yolk under my feather touch. Our girl bodies. Brown gravy runs down the window (only I can see it). Uncle says be careful driving home. Yes, okay. See y'all at Christmas. Shrink three sizes. Waltz out the door with the bird in my fist.