

QUEER ODE FOR MOLLY DYEING FABRICS IN THE PARK

by CJ Scruton

There are _____ we invented for this feeling. And I'm having a hard time getting started, saying what needs _____ without making myself a liar, a father who takes back everything before it's been given. I had metaphors at the ready, too: a well, a stone, a wing, an anvil cloud that hangs a ring on the smoky sun —

I think of that statistic that half our bodies replace themselves each day, each year. I once skimmed half of a study about gender-swapping sea bass and now see sex cells in my head as dumb joyous carnival goldfish crowding a ziploc. Is it what we want, to never not be the children of our own shed skin and follicles, a stranger invited in? What I'm trying to _____ is —

Everything I haven't _____ sounds beautiful to me, but I still cry when _____. Like I doubled over on my kitchen floor yesterday after staining a tea towel, a little knife-nick on my finger embedded brown-red in the linen forever —

I've never wanted to keep a name _____. I've been meaning to ask you something, something important, and _____ dissipates, swims away at its edges when I try to want to. Nothing has a name or a steady body held down by our hands in a bucket of indigo dye. Color change means chemical reaction, right? Means the molecules are something totally new, now? Tell me _____. They insist. They said in secret that _____, but really it was no secret at all, right? You knew all along where that chant came from, you knew even when you couldn't recognize the voice what it sounded like when it kept calling you back —