

**Love letter to Berlin.**      by JSA Lowe

This woman I wanted to marry once came up with moonfruit. Delicate, pale golden, how you'd buy it from a street vendor attached to some string and tie it round your wrist to float on home, ripe and glowing. A little star adrift behind it, tugged along. I

don't know how you do it, you use the same words as everybody else. But yours settle into me, sift down into my bones in an instant and calm whatever is slaving at the bars of my cage, an Ativan of the mind. Tinge the worst days with sweetness, and never once make me feel stupid. How can I be anything but grateful, but dumb.

For there are things you will not hear, and I have learned them: oh we're adroit, who took sentences for our playthings, you who speak my language better than I do. In however many years you have never misspoken.

Everybody does not agree that I am the problem. I am troublesome yes, I am vexatious, I can lie here and feel my heart triphammer in my chest, was I a chode to her? A chad? Are my bedsheets grainy? Do I not sufficiently validate the existential horrors?

My nerve ending, my eggplant, my carbohydrate, let me admit I am the first to fall in person. My pretzel, my diplodocus, I have unmade more friendships than I saved (the letter *RETURN TO SENDER* in a desk drawer, she can not read it after I die but it will stop being my problem).

My newest one. My egg. My first thing in the morning last at night. You might only be chagrined, not grieve, you might feel more nonplussed than grave. *You called me, and that's a ceremony too.* I apologize for my belonging, knavish now, to you.