

Stephanie Cleveland

North Dakota

For her, barracudas occurred when alone
together a moment, before the anniversary of the year they decided
not to get married, she clasped him as he stood at the sink,
pressing into his backside. Quietly a train paused. He gave
her a wine glass filled with pomade and nine tambourines
clanged around their apartment. She put first one failure,
then an Order inside him and then immediately named it
please. A treadmill made her life less distracting,
and razors shared some of the same ambulances
as those she unceremoniously maneuvered to the floor,
alongside his shattered wimple. Without any trouble,
they had, like remote controls, tumbled from the console
of her anima, and then suddenly resurfaced,
only to find Chicago ended in dark red—
He wasn't sure it would be so easy.
Even on sunny days, when the wind raced from its early fall
team meetings and coyotes ambushed the backyard
of this man, whom she loved and perforated,
still innominate bones brushed back and forth
in a direction not altogether unsatisfactory
to clouds with no conception
of what they would grow up to be.