

SARA MOORE WAGNER

CAPTIVITY NARRATIVE

In the middle of the day, the vultures crown  
the lake above where you lie  
on the shoreline, your skirt knit full  
of sugar ants, the sweet of your skin  
seeping into the dry clover.  
You could almost be the old cow  
our grandfather pushed  
into the creek bed, released  
like a bluegill. Found later, split  
open, ribs like fingers. And didn't you know  
you were this—unidentifiable  
figure, redolent as meat, pickled  
in your own age, the salt of every  
meal expelled into droplets.  
It's the season for it, though,  
for lying still in a meadow  
while the clouds and birds festoon  
the sky, so that anyone could just  
imagine it being made for—made in  
the image of—where there might  
be a pasture beyond this, full  
of honeysuckle, where nothing tracks  
your slow progress into sleep, nothing  
scurries over your arms so small  
and dark—invisible world now  
suddenly open as a mouth or palm.  
Here you are: almost to the molar.  
Ripe. Isn't the land supposed to be  
here for you, to carry you home  
as your feet do your body, little  
by little: Plodding and smacking

across every stone until: Doorway  
or something else, it never matters  
how you get out, only that you  
always do.

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