

Terrible's Roadhouse

It's the year everyone's parents are dying of cancer and my father calls me from the road. Tonight he'll sleep at the World's Largest Gas Station in Jean, Nevada. Safe in the bed of his 18 wheeler while the world whirs past.

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The arithmetic of my unfeminism at Mary's Strip Club the same weekend I decide I'd like to be a mother. One slinks by. Asks you want to see my pussy and for once I really don't. An apology for every plate of food dropped on accident. Expensive dinners upended when the boyfriend falls asleep. Sad as strip-club sad. The married pilots get bored and leave. Forget all my names for daughter. I want a head of hair to bury my face into. My arms can't hold anything without breaking.

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There's no talking in my fantasies. You remain voiceless to me. Something very patient and very focused is a man who loves you. At Venice Beach women dress as hippies but won't say Palestine. I want to buy a green candle for abundance but there are things I stand to lose. Do you want to be loved or understood?

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I'm looking for signs of you anywhere. At four in the morning, listening to footsteps in the apartment above mine. Woman or ghost. On the Oregon Coast combing broken shells. I have no choice but to find a fractured one and love it. Anything I keep for its beauty is destined to fall apart.