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An Autobiography in Eight Parts

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I. You write him a postcard. “I don’t know how to tell you but I’m finally letting go,” it says. The postcard is from Paris and when you finish writing it, you slide it back into the drawer with all the other words you never said. You ask your empty hands if this means you are letting go. Everyone memorizes the backs of their hands, but you’ll never know your own as well as you know the scar like a poem permanent on his thumb.

II. You like tea more than coffee but you drink coffee because on days when you relent to a cup of tea you become afraid that you’re turning into your mother. You drink it anyway and remember the best moments of childhood.

III. At night you run your fingertips across your ribcage and wonder about all the words that don’t live there yet. You’re bad at commitments but sometimes when you read Mary Oliver you sigh in relief. These are words that could rest on your ribs forever.

IV. You grow playlists slowly on your computer, choosing the songs carefully. You’re trying to bring that feeling back with the music. Maybe nostalgia is the closest you’ll ever get.

V. You told her once that you were bad at goodbyes. All this time later, and it’s still true.

VI. You type fast, “Maybe someday,” and hit send.

VII. You ask your hands again what it means to let go.

VIII. The tea water is boiling. Your hands still don’t answer.