
Tornado

It is a cyclonic summer
and as we await a storm
she lets me paint
her toenails bright
metallic blue, later
in the basement
dark like a closet,
she bites
a lifesaver to make
a spark, but
that doesn't work
so she leans into
me instead.
pheromones,
she says,
and licks my elbow.
pheromones,
she says,
and wraps her tongue
around my earlobe.
Pheromones,
she says,
and scrapes the skin
of my neck with
the edge of her teeth, later

we sit on the porch damp
and steaming wood
worn smooth from other
evenings such as this.
While water bugs dimple mud
puddles in the drive, we
peel away layers
of an artichoke.
As we work our way
toward the center,
she plucks a petal gently
dips it in melted butter,
on the way to her mouth
it drips onto her leg,
I suck it off as she pulls
the petal through her teeth,
she places it, emaciated,
onto my thigh, aligning
it with the already assembled
rockette row of artichoke leaves.
Breathing hot butter
breath into my mouth,
she says pheromones,
pheromones, pheromones
and plunges her teeth
into the center, the heart
of the artichoke. I say
love love love.
She chomps away,
and swallows noisily.