

Valley Vista

by Katie Annette Murphy

My fingers are longer than they deserve to be.

Tucked in strappy heels, tucked in playground sand. Wet from autumn rain, sparkling in the streetlight—dipped silica diamonds.

The crescent moons in my nails chafe as we dig. She looks at me and laughs.

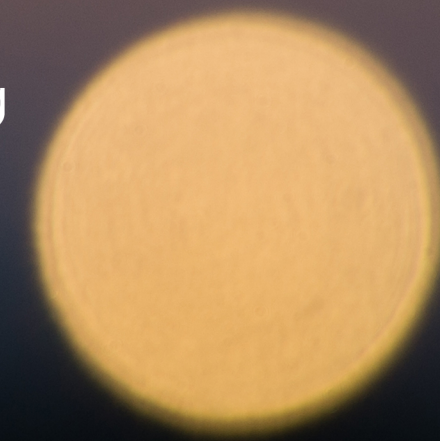
Laughs at the way my body contorts itself in the sandbox, careful not to ruin the awkwardly draping, awkwardly formal dress I'd never wear again.

Laughs at how much I worry about being here, worry about being fourteen and out past midnight in the park, out past the school, out of cigarettes and out of the closet.

Laughs at rumors that my fingers fit inside her. That our mutual desire to have a pair there, meant they had to be ours. That the fingers that painted purple on my eyelids before trips to Blockbuster married themselves in trips elsewhere.

We stack dirt high and bury our hands in each other's piles. She says something in French about the moon, asks me what it means and I say I don't know.

She laughs.



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