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Carving the Ocean

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Carving the Ocean

I woke to a pillow on the floor
and the feeling of great decay. The day after
bloodsucking day in a whirlpool sea
with Cassiopeia folding down her aurora
like a crook in my arm.
I think I should tell you that all the stars are dying
and is that the saddest thing you know?
My butcher block bed
was dressed with lion skins and laurels,
when all you really wanted
was diamonds and pearls or the head of a queen.
There's an ocean and a tide carved
in the back of your eyelids,
like the way you only loved my face,
or the cadence of a song that made your hair sway.
It's just the way your clothes travel up your skin
and the fabric that wore
away upon your knees.
The red leather scrapes of skin
from crawling on rocks to wade in a tide pool.
Bonfires make me think of you mending
the gown to make it your own,
domestic and secondhand. Last night,
the cat fell asleep in the basin of the porcelain tub,
slowly dripping a water dish.
I think I should tell you he mewed me awake
and burrowed under the folds
in a pile of your dresses,
just to show me he knew
about the blanketed sky at night, where no light
shows through.
I could live a single day
the way he lived the last year.
The way you only loved my face,
or the cadence of the ocean in your eyelids,

swaying your hair like sails
in a hurricane.

About Matthew Salyers

Matthew Salyers is a native of western Pennsylvania, not to be confused with eastern Pennsylvania. Hobbies include nail-biting, vacuuming, and reading about how people died. His short fiction has appeared in *Oblong Magazine* as well as numerous outlets on the Internets. He does not know who invented the Internet or how long it took or why we are not living on the Moon yet.