

The Recipe

(After "Ritual For Getting Rid Of" by Jaime Forsythe)

Madeline Ewanyshyn

The grumble in my stomach reminds me of when you used to say "hey let's play that game where we're lost little girls starving in the woods" *your woods* your personal place to get lost in and I could come too if I wanted feast on mushrooms and fiddleheads savour salmon berries spit out the sour and run my tongue along my teeth picking out the twigs gargling the dirt it was then that I learned to crave hunger and to look but not touch in this place *your kingdom*.

You had a lifesize playhouse and a posse of plump chickens nibbling on sweet corn pigs swelling with slop and the sheep you named Barbara and Babette when I asked you what happens to the animals afterwards you pretended not to understand we clambered inside to sit by the air vent salivating at the scent of a 9 o'clock dinner playing with your porcelain dolls I knew you'd outgrow in a week I was lucky enough to help you throw them away like scraping off the food that clung to your dinner plate.

What I wanted the most were *those things that made you beautiful* those warm vanilla sugar lotion coca cola chapstick cupcake whipped cream lush bath-bomb snacks that tempted me like a finger in the frosting bowl I stole your secrets and even now when you pretend not to recognize me I can taste those crabapple sickly sweet swollen blackberries and the wild bergamot that grew by *your woods* where I learned that you were never really lost or hungry like me.