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Marzipan

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Remission · Marcus Cafagña

Walking home up the many flights after chemo, the harshly lit little room.
Dark yellow grain of the wallpaper gleaming in the streetlight like stained wood.
The silhouette of a face stares back from the window.
I remember wet, green Pennsylvania mountains.
The other patients in the bathroom with me, toking joints for depression.
The doctors breaking skin for a good vein.
Or standing on the edge of the surf at Boca Chica. Still a teenager joyriding with Angel Salazar, cutting the state of New Mexico in half. With a retooled Chevy across the desert after dark.
Stopping later where the Rio Grande ends, both of us sitting there in the high sunshine with bottles of beer. A string of bubbles floating up the neck. How I envied his cool detachment, separating what had been from what was just beginning.
His pidgin breaking over potholes like a salsa beat, those plastic saints standing above the radio, as if about to dance.