

The Head is a Canvas

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These are the things we keep hidden: our bodies when we cannot bear them. Our lenient stomachs. Our shame. We are gifted bearers.

Last night, you exposed your scalp: no hair to hide behind, black whorls on the skin. *The head is a canvas*, you said, your teeth bared.

I held so many nothings on my tongue. I wanted to say:
How much the hair has changed you. How much we refuse to bare.

You thought these were your choices: red wig or brown. Thick hips or cocaine. We falter in this climate. We lose our bearings.

Even when the sky is heat-muted cornflower. Even when
nectarines plump and languish on the branch, we search for bareness.