

Odd Cathedral

. . . down the railroad tracks but be careful sometimes the train men are watching you but if they come looking for you just slip into the bush they'll never find you there okay now up the river trail until you find the spot where we buried our time capsule and the swelling current swallowed the shoes we left out on the river bank but be sure to take a quick stop to heat your bare skin on a warm rock and to soak in the spritz of the rapids listen to the whispering cicadas before you head back up to the glade and off the trail and down the leafy green halls then shimmy across the fallen pine tree and hop over the threatening red ivy and around the sides of the crumbling old overpass notice how the concrete folds at all the sneaky spots where weeds roll through cement cracks and the summer wind sneezes at you as you sink your fingers into dull graffiti clutch the dying edifice and scale its fallen walls and name tags and stones with your chalky hands and dirty sneakers and soles and climb climb climb the odd cathedral and sit atop all its paintings and patron saints and ghosts and watch the sun rise over the valley with me through the aperture of my phone when I post a single photo to the gram.

II

Hold up.

You saw something odd back at the river.

Retrace your steps
back down the crumbling concrete edifice
and under the overpass,
wade through the underbrush where we buried our time capsule and you'll
find the spot where the dirty river sprinkles your hot skin with muddy mist
and the mighty heron swoops down from the tall maple trees lining the
valley and sweeps across the shallow rocks and casts a shadow over the
spot where the ducks pick at moss and bronze water rolls across your feet
as you write in your baby blue notebook with the pink "inspo" imprinted in
cursive on its beat-up cover and you, so beautiful, perched there on a
shady rock amidst all this rush and all this flow, so brilliant and bewildered,
you etch a poem about loss and gain and distance and entanglement and
fractures in interstitial spaces where the smoke-choked summer air may or
may not teach us something about the little time our love has left (it's all
very situational!) but hurry with your musings my friend because we have
to get home by 4 and the subway trains get awfully full by 3:30 and you
know if we leave the river now and go back up our secret trail, back under
the overpass, take the shortcut through that spot in the backwoods, we
might be able to stop off at the grocery store before—

Hold up.

You saw something odd back at the river.

Listen to the roaring rapids all around us
and savor the warmth of the sunbathed rocks beneath us.

Throw me my backpack
and I'll take a polaroid of you scratching away in your notebook.