

## Bleach Haiku

summer evening,<sup>1</sup>  
moths circle the silent lake,<sup>2</sup>  
stirring the water<sup>3</sup>

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### Endnotes

1. bathed in an alabaster glow, we dangle our legs over the lacquered water surface. sun-baked chinese girls in borrowed americana, three sizes too big. we strung friendship bracelets from spider webs. pretended our names were becky or sue, like those catalog girls who beamed in gingham. you peeled the sky like a clementine, sections scattering into cicada-hum. an orange tang clung to the comers of your lips. i could have kissed you then, dusk spilling golden ichor into our mouths.
2. its wings were paper, aching for fire. the cheap white porch bulb buzzes on, spilling its milk across the yard. we watch as the air thickens with wings, moths slamming their bodies against the glass, frantic to sacrifice themselves to heaven's halo. was it the light they sought, or was it some stubborn pull they could not resist, bodies wound too tight to turn away. i wondered if we were any different, irresistibly drawn to a glow that could never belong to us, circling it until our powder shed from skin. one slipped behind the socket and its wings fluttered to stillness. the night gave no answer whether it found its light or only its ending.
3. cicadas drowning themselves in the tremoloing heat. exuviae scattered haphazardly around our sandals, amber husks vibrating with phantom legs. i bent over the lake and your face was swimming in it like an overripe moon, henna freckles blurred into darting minnows. you said if we jumped in now, the whole night would bleach us clean. would we then climb out new, maybe even white, maybe even shining? you leaned closer, breath grazing my cheeks, as if daring me to fall. dusk tightened its hold on our throats. i cupped the water & it broke.

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