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## The Smell of Sin and Cigarettes

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## THE SMELL OF SIN AND CIGARETTES

Laura Hillen

*I have this strange habit of memorizing shoes to perfection  
as I pass, but never the people. But it wasn't until I realized it  
that I really began to do it.*

Black siren  
to white sunset  
I've been telling myself this  
lie for too long.  
Pinging from one bone plate  
to the next  
asphyxiated in my mind,  
it has now become  
the most divine of truths,  
one not even providence  
would dare to define.  
Strung out on a couch too small  
I can feel my arm slipping off the edges  
stung by the spiders  
I know are not there.  
Alone and abandoned  
it makes no difference  
save for the strays  
who rob me  
of my innocence  
namely, the ones with bad teeth.  
I prefer the blank backs of novels  
to the acquiescent voices within  
so I can steal something beautiful  
from the world  
like the beauty  
it stole from me.  
It's three a.m.  
and the sun is shining,  
but I am like hair  
in your eyes  
rather than the succulent fruit  
we both know you prefer.