

CLAIRE CHRISTOFF

# Elegy for My Wisdom Teeth

I only saw you once  
through the slate-blue glow  
of the X-ray projector  
but mine was the only mouth  
you ever called home.  
You hid for years  
in anticipation  
of the moment  
at which I might need to  
tear into the raw flesh

of some long-extinct bird  
or gnash at the fibers  
of prehistoric foliage.  
You must feel such  
dejection from beyond

as I pulse such greens  
in an overpriced blender,  
forever replacing you  
with electricity  
and spinning steel.

I signed the waiver that would  
afford you an afterlife of  
dental schools and research labs,  
but you put up a fight, coming  
out in too many little pieces  
to resemble anything akin to teeth.  
I won't remember you that way,  
though. Like the appendix,  
the tailbone, and the third eyelid,  
you were useful once. And so I

reminisce. I try to grieve the  
times we shared as my jaw aches  
for codeine and clove oil.  
Pain is my only penance  
for dealing the coup de grâce  
before your roots ever had  
the chance to germinate through  
my bedrock of bone and gum.  
Truthfully, I never cared about you.  
But I can never win you back.