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A Refrain in Utero

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A Refrain in Utero

Abstract

You knew me first as a craving;
rose hip stew simmered brown
over peppered crayfish– I smelled life
on the windows, grandmother shifting stories
into steam, walls summer-slick
beneath peeling yellow paper.

Cover Page Footnote

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A Refrain in Utero

by Kathryn Merwin

You knew me first as a craving;
rose hip stew simmered brown
over peppered crayfish– I smelled life
on the windows, grandmother shifting stories
into steam, walls summer-slick
beneath peeling yellow paper.

I whispered in your cold-
pressed ear, your stethoscope, I warbled you
a litany. I kicked you
in the rib over the julbord, holly grove and caged
bird: you felt my roots spread. Felt the tide
rise in your stomach.

We met at the solstice, over lingonberries
and sweet golden Pommac. I split your body,
two hemispheres of home, one little moon
tethered to a planet. I know
what your heart sounds like
from the inside.

Kathryn Merwin is a native of Washington, D.C. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *the minnesota review*, *Permafrost Magazine*, *Folio*, *apt*, *Notre Dame Review*, and *Jabberwocky Review*, among others. In 2015, she was awarded the Nancy D. Hargrove Editors' Prize for Poetry and nominated for a Pushcart Prize. She currently serves as Co-Editor-in-Chief of *Milk Journal* and Managing Editor of *The Scarab*.